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A HISTORY
OF
E N G L A N D
FROM THE FIRST
INVASION BY THE ROMANS

BY
JOHN LINGARD, D.D.

VOLUME III.

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THE THIRD VOLUME.



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HISTORY OF ENGLAND.

CHAP. I.

JOHN.

SURNAMED SANSTERRE, OR LACKLAND.¹

CONTEMPORARY PRINCES.

<i>Emprs. of Ger.</i>	<i>Kings of Scotland.</i>	<i>K. of France.</i>	<i>Kings of Spain.</i>	<i>Popes.</i>
Philip 1208. Otho IV.	William 1214. Alexander II.	Philip Augustus.	Alphonso IX. 1214. Henry I.	Innocent III. 1216. Honorius III.

ACCESSION OF JOHN — CAPTIVITY AND DEATH OF HIS NEPHEW
— LOSS OF NORMANDY, ANJOU, AND MAINE — CONTROVERSY
WITH POPE INNOCENT — INTERDICTION — THE KING'S SUBMIS-
SION — DEMANDS OF THE BARONS — GRANT OF MAGNA CHARTA
— RENEWAL OF THE CIVIL WAR — JOHN OBTAINS THE SUP-
PORT OF THE POPE — THE BARONS OFFER THE CROWN TO
LOUIS OF FRANCE — THE KING DIES.

RICHARD had left no legitimate issue.² In the strict order of hereditary succession, the crown

CHAP.
I.

¹ This was the usual appellation of younger sons, whose fathers died during their minority. They could not possess fiefs, till they were of age to do the services attached to them, which by law was fixed at twenty-one years.

² He had a natural son called Philip, who, the same year, murdered the viscount of Limoges, because he had been the occasion of Richard's death. Hoved. 452.

CHAP.
I.

John ap-
pointed
succes-
sor by
Richard.
1199.

at his death should have devolved to his nephew Arthur, the son of Geoffry, and duke of Bretagne, a boy in the twelfth year of his age. Formerly the young prince had been declared heir apparent : but his mother Constantia by her indiscretion and caprice contrived to alienate the mind of his uncle, while the aged and politic Eleanor laboured with assiduity to draw closer the bonds of affection between her two sons. Under her guidance, John had almost obliterated the memory of his former treasons, and in reward of his fidelity, had obtained from his brother the restoration of a large portion of his estates. When Richard lay on his death-bed, the claim of Arthur seems to have been forgotten. He declared John his successor, bequeathed to him three fourths of his treasures, and required all present to do him homage.³

Obtains
Aquitaine
and Nor-
mandy.

Eleanor was still considered as rightful "lady" of the provinces, which she had inherited from her father. By public instruments she transferred to John the homage, fealty, and services of the people of Aquitaine and Poitou, who acquiesced without a murmur in the dominion of their new master.⁴ In Normandy he was equally fortunate. Not a voice was raised against him : and he received without opposition the ducal

³ Hov. 449.

⁴ See one of those instruments in Rymer, i. 112. John did her homage for the gift, and then restored it to her during her life. It was agreed that neither should make alienations without the consent of the other. See also Rymer, i. 110, 111.

coronet and sword from the archbishop of Rouen. But the natives of Maine, Touraine, and Anjou, espoused openly the claim of Arthur. John for the present was satisfied with taking summary vengeance, and sacked the two cities of Mans and Angers. His opponents found a powerful though treacherous protector in the king of France, to whom Constantia had intrusted the person and interests of her son.⁵

CHAP.

I.

Apr. 25.

Acknow-
ledged in
England.

In England, as the reader must already have noticed, not only the form, but much of the spirit, of an elective monarchy had been hitherto retained. Since the conquest five kings had ascended the throne; and four of these rested their principal title on the choice of the people. After the death of Richard, men were divided between the rival claims of John and of Arthur. Archbishop Hubert, William Marshal, and the justiciary Fitz-Peter, in consequence of Richard's last will, had commanded all freemen to swear allegiance to John: but they were alarmed by the hesitation which seemed to prevail among the prelates and barons, many of whom during the preceding reign had deserved the enmity, or had been enriched by the forfeiture, of that prince. A great council was held at Northampton: threats and promises were artfully employed to awaken the fears, and encourage the hopes, of the more reluctant: and at last an unanimous

⁵ Hoved. 450. Paris, 164, 165.

CHAP.

I.

resolution was procured to swear fealty to John, on the condition that he should respect the present rights of each individual. On this intelligence, he repaired to England, and was crowned with the usual solemnity at Westminster. The primate opened the ceremony with a remarkable speech intended to justify the exclusion of Arthur. The crown, he observed, was not the property of any particular person. It was the gift of the nation, which chose, generally from the members of the reigning family, the prince, who appeared the most deserving of royalty in the existing circumstances. They had that day assembled to exercise this important duty, and had chosen for their sovereign John, earl of Mortaigne, brother to the deceased monarch. To these principles John signified his assent.⁶

⁶ Hoved. 451, Paris, 165. In the preamble, however, to a law which was published a few days later (June 7) at Northampton, he was careful to unite both his titles. God had raised him to the throne, which belonged to him by hereditary right, through the unanimous consent and favour of the clergy and people. Leg. Sax. 354. —The object of this law, said to have been passed at the proposal of archbishop Hubert the chancellor, was to reduce the fees in the chancery to their ancient standard. It was enacted that for a writ granting the king's peace, the fee should be lowered from 18s. 4d. to 2s.; for a confirmation of a former charter, from 8l. 5s. to 18s. 4d., of which latter sum the chancellor was to receive a mark, the vice-chancellor and prothonotary 2s. each, and 12 pence was to be paid for the wax;—and for a charter of new enfeoffment, a mark of gold or ten marks of silver to the chancellor: to the vice-chancellor and prothonotary a mark each, and 5s. for the wax. Ibid. Hence it appears that the price of gold had risen. One mark of gold was of equal value with ten of silver. From Madox we learn that in the

The French kings had long cast a wishful eye towards the provinces possessed by the English monarchs in France. If the ambition of Philip shrunk before the superior prowess of Richard, it expanded again at the accession of his weak and pusillanimous brother. With Arthur in his possession, he determined to fight his own battles, while he pretended to support the cause of an injured orphan; and having conferred the sword of knighthood on the young prince, he traversed Normandy, burnt Evreux, and placed garrisons in the fortresses of Anjou, Maine, and Touraine. An uninteresting war ensued: the war, at the solicitation of the cardinal Peter of Capua, was suspended by an armistice; and the armistice terminated in a peace, which did little honour to either of the two monarchs. Philip sacrificed the interests of Arthur, acknowledged John for the rightful heir to his late brother, and compelled the young prince to do homage to his uncle for the duchy of Bretagne. But the English king had purchased this advantage by the cession of Evreux to Philip, by the payment of twenty thousand marks as the "relief" for his succession, and by the transfer of several valuable fiefs to Louis, the son of Philip, as the marriage portion of his niece Blanche of Castile, who was immediately married to the French

CHAP:

I:

War with
France.

Peace.
May 23,
1200.

reigns of Stephen and Henry II. their relative value was as nine to one. Madox, c. ix.

CHAP.

I.

prince. That these transactions might be valid, according to the principles of the feudal jurisprudence, a curious farce was enacted. John had never performed that homage, which was requisite to entitle a vassal to the legal possession, and consequently to the power of disposing, of his estates. Philip, therefore, though he was already master by conquest of several of the places ceded by the treaty, restored them to the English king; who first did homage and swore fealty to his sovereign lord, and then, being thus lawfully seized of his foreign dominions, transferred the stipulated portions with the proper ceremonies to Philip and Louis. Their former friendship now seemed to revive: and when John visited Paris, the French king resigned his own palace for the accommodation of his brother of England.⁷

Philip divorced.

Had John possessed the spirit and enterprise of Richard, he might have obtained very different terms from Philip, who at that moment was engaged in a warm and dangerous controversy with the pontiff Innocent III. Several years before, while Richard was in captivity, he had solicited the hand of Ingelburga, the

⁷ Nov. 452. 454. 456. West. 264. Rigord. 44. Blanche was daughter to John's sister Eleanor, who had borne her husband, Alphonso of Castile, three sons and four daughters.—During this year the king published a law at Hastings asserting his dominion over the British seas, and ordering all foreign ships to strike their topsails to his flag under the penalty of capture and confiscation. Selden, *Mare clausum*. ii. 265.

beautiful sister of the king of Denmark. Ingelburga was conducted to Amiens: the ceremony of her marriage was immediately followed by that of her coronation: and the next morning Philip, to the astonishment of the world, required her attendants to convey her back to her brother. On their refusal she was sent to a convent: and a divorce was pronounced by the archbishop of Rheims under the pretence of affinity, as she was cousin to Philip's deceased wife. The king, though his offers were contemptuously rejected by several princesses, at length found a woman who dared to trust to his honour, in Agnes, the daughter of the duke of Moravia. They were married, and continued to cohabit, in defiance of the prohibition of pope Celestine, who had annulled the sentence of the archbishop. To Celestine succeeded Innocent, a pontiff, who to the vigour of youth and an unsullied purity of character added the most lofty notions of the papal authority, and a determination to restrain the excesses and immorality of the different princes of christendom. At the request of the king of Denmark he espoused the cause of Ingelburga: and his legate, the cardinal Peter, laid the dominions of Philip under an interdict. This was to punish the innocent for the guilty: but it had the effect of subduing that obstinacy, which had been proof against the considerations of honour and conscience. Unable to

1200.
Jan.

CHAP.

I.

Aug. 7.

1201.

1 Mar.

enforce disobedience to the interdict, and assailed by the clamours of his subjects, Philip consented to dismiss Agnes, to treat Ingelburga as queen, and to submit to the revision of the original sentence. In the council of Soissons the beauty and tears of the Danish princess pleaded forcibly in her favour: the objections of her opponents were easily refuted; and the legate had prepared to pronounce judgment, when Philip informed him that he acknowledged the validity of the marriage. Ingelburga derived at the time little benefit from her victory. With the title of queen she was confined in a fortress, and strictly debarred from the society of any but her own women. After some years they were reconciled.⁸

John divorced.

The failure of Philip in this attempt to sport with the matrimonial contract, did not deter John from following his example. Twelve years had elapsed since his marriage with Hadwisa or Johanna, the heiress to the earldom of Gloucester. Interest, not affection, had brought about their union: but her estates, however valuable to the earl of Mortaigne, were of little consequence to the king of England: and a sentence of divorce on the usual plea of consanguinity was readily granted by the archbishop of Bourdeaux. John immediately sent ambassadors to Lisbon to demand the princess of

⁸ Hoved. 416. 456. 461. 464.

Portugal : but before he could receive an answer, saw by accident Isabella, daughter to Aymar, count of Angouleme, who had been publicly promised, and privately espoused, to Hugh, count of La Marche. The king was captivated by her beauty : the glare of a crown seduced the faith of the father and his daughter : and the unexpected marriage of Isabella and John deprived the princess of Portugal of a husband, the count de la Marche of a wife. The complaints of the one and the threats of the other were equally disregarded. John conducted his bride in triumph to England, and was crowned with her at Westminster by the primate.⁹

1200.
Oct. 8.

It is from this inauspicious marriage that we must date the decline of the Plantagenet family. When Isabella was seduced from her husband, John was lord of the French coast from the borders of Flanders to the foot of the Pyrenees : in three years he had irrevocably lost the best portion of this valuable territory, the provinces which his predecessors had inherited

Captivity
of Arthur.

⁹ Hoved. 457. 461. Paris, 163. At this time all the nations of Christendom were thrown into consternation by the commentators on the apocalypse, who do not appear to have been better gifted with the spirit of prophecy than their more recent successors. They taught that at the end of the year 1200 expired the term of 1000 years, during which the devil was to be bound in the bottomless pit (Rev. xx. 1—3) : and left it to the imagination of their hearers to conceive the confusion he would cause, and the horrors he would perpetrate, now that he was at liberty. Quod si diabolus ligatus, says Hoveden, tot et tanta intulerit mala mundo, quot et quanta inferet solutus ! Precemur ergo, &c. Hoved, 465.

CHAP. from William of Normandy, and Fulk of Anjou.

I.

The sword of the count de la Marche was indeed too feeble to inflict any serious injury. The arrival of John soon restrained his predatory incursions: and a summons to appear with his partisans in the king's court warned him to look round for protection. He appealed to the justice of Philip their common lord; nor was that prince sorry that the tergiversation of John afforded him a pretext for humbling so powerful a vassal. The provisions of the late treaty were instantly forgotten: the discontented barons hastened to join the banner of the French king: fortress after fortress surrendered to the confederates: and the heart of John sank in despondency, when an unexpected event arrested the progress of his enemies, and gave him a temporary superiority. Eleanor, the queen mother, was lodged in the castle of Mirabeau in Poitou. Its garrison was as weak as its defences were contemptible: and the glory of making her a prisoner was allotted to the young Arthur her grandson. Accompanied by the barons of the province he invested Mirabeau. The gates were easily forced; but the queen, retiring into the tower, refused to capitulate, and found means to acquaint her son with her danger. John, roused from his apathy, flew to her relief; routed the enemy who came out to oppose him; entered the walls together with the fugitives; and after a sharp

1202.

Aug. 1.

conflict compelled the survivors to ask for quarter. Among the captives was the young duke of Bretagne, whom he placed under a strong guard in the castle of Falaise. The rest of the prisoners he sent to England: and Philip, having burnt the city of Tours, returned to Paris.¹⁰

CHAP.

I.

Aug. 1.

This sudden alteration of fortune had placed in the king's hands the fate of his rival. If the voice of humanity pleaded loudly in favour of a nephew and orphan, an erroneous policy objected the danger of permitting a prince to live, who as he now claimed, might on some future occasion obtain, the crown. It does not, however, appear that John fixed at first on the dreadful expedient of assassination. He visited his captive, exhorted him to desist from his pretensions, and represented the folly of trusting to the friendship of the king of France, the natural enemy of his family. To this admonition the high-spirited youth answered, that he would resign his claim only with his breath: and that the crown of England together with the French provinces, belonged to himself in right of his father. John retired pensive and discontent: Arthur was transferred to the castle of Rouen, and confined in a dungeon of the new tower. Within a few weeks he had disappeared. If the

His death.

¹⁰ Paris, 174. West, 264. Twenty-two of the captives were starved to death in Corfe castle. Ann. de Marg. 13. Eleanor herself lived two years longer, and died in 1204. Mailros, 181.

CHAP.

I.

manner of his death could have borne investigation, John for his own honour would have made it public. His silence proves that the young prince was murdered. Report ascribed his fate to the dagger of his uncle : but the king of England could surely have hired an assassin without actually dipping his hands in the blood of a nephew.¹¹ His niece Eleanor, the sister of Arthur, and commonly called the maid of Bretagne, was sent to England, and placed under the most rigorous confinement, that she might not, by marrying some foreign prince, raise up a new competitor for the succession of her father.¹²

Confederacy
against
John.

It is unfortunate that at this interesting crisis we are deserted by the contemporary annalists, who led us through the preceding reigns, and are compelled to rely on the authority of writers, who lived at a later period, and whose broken and doubtful notices cannot furnish a connected or satisfactory narrative.¹³ After a short

¹¹ Subito evanuit, modo fere omnibus ignorato, utinam non ut fama refert invida. Par. 174. Cito post evanuit.—Rex suspectus habebatur ab omnibus, quasi illum manu propria occidisset. West. 264. Feriâ quintâ ante Pascha propria manu interfecit. Ann. de Marg. 13. Will. Brito says, he took Arthur into a boat, stabbed him twice with his own hand, and threw the dead body into the river about three miles from the castle. Philipid. l. vi. p. 167.

¹² Chron. Tho. Wik. 36.

¹³ It is singular that the works of Diceto, Benedict, Gervase, Newbrigensis, Brompton, and Hoveden should all end about this period. Paris is the next in time, but at John's accession he was so young, that he can hardly be termed a contemporary writer. He transcribed, indeed, Wendover ; but Wendover's account of this period is very imperfect.

pause the whispers of suspicion were converted into a conviction of the king's guilt. The Bretons immediately assembled, swore to be revenged on the murderer, and proceeded to settle the succession to the dukedom. Guy of Thouars entered the meeting, carrying in his arms a child of the name of Alice, his daughter by Constantia, whom he had married after the death of her first husband. The princess was acknowledged without prejudice to the right of Eleanor now in the custody of her sanguinary uncle; and Guy was appointed her guardian, and governor of the dutchy. The bishop of Rennes then hastened to Paris to accuse the English king of the murder; and Philip gladly summoned him to prove his innocence in the presence of the French peers. John, however, refused: and the court pronounced judgment, that "whereas John, duke of Normandy, in violation of his oath to Philip his lord, had murdered the son of his elder brother, a ho-mager of the crown of France, and near kins-man to the king, and had perpetrated the crime within the signiory of France, he was found guilty of felony and treason, and was therefore adjudged to forfeit all the lands which he held by homage."¹¹

¹¹ West. 264. Ann. de Marg. 13. During this year the assize of bread was fixed throughout the realm on the principle, that in a quarter of wheat (supposed to weigh 512 pounds, Rudborn, 257), the baker, after deducting every expense, should make a clear profit

CHAP.

I.

He retires
to Eng-
land.
1203.

To execute this sentence, Philip on the one side, and the Bretons on the other, entered John's dominions. After the reduction of several minor fortresses, it was resolved to besiege Chateau Gaillard, a strong castle built by the late king on a rock hanging over the Seine. Though John was at the head of a numerous army, he seemed ashamed to shew his face to the enemy; and the task of relieving the besieged devolved on his general, the earl of Pembroke. A bridge of boats, which had been thrown across the river, effectually prevented the arrival of supplies to the garrison. To break through this obstacle, the earl planned a combined attack by land and water. He reached the French camp in the night at the hour appointed; and

of three pennies. A scale was made of the price of wheat from 2s. the quarter the lowest, to 6s. the highest, price known: and opposite each price was fixed the corresponding weight of the quarter loaf, or loaf to be sold for one farthing (*Panis venalis formatus pro quadrante*. Consuet. Dunstap. xxxix). Thus:

Quarter of wheat.	Loaf of white bread.			Loaf of brown bread.		
s.	lb.	oz.	dwt.	lb.	oz.	dwt.
6	0	9	12	1	2	8
5	1	2	8	1	7	4
4	1	9	12	2	3	12
3	2	4	16	3	2	8
2	3	0	0	4	0	0

The pound was the money pound divided into 20 shillings or 240 pence, otherwise 12 ounces, and 240 pennyweights. Paris, 175. Leg. Sax. 359. In 1256 a new assize was fixed from the price of one shilling to 12s. the quarter: and as the profit of the baker was fixed at a lower sum, the weight of the loaf was rather augmented. See Annal. Burt. 365.

by the vigour of his assault threw the whole army into confusion. But the flotilla of seventy small vessels, which had been compelled to row against the wind and the current, arrived only in the morning in time to witness the repulse of the earl; and retired hastily from the threatened attack of a victorious enemy. This was the last effort which the king made in defence of his foreign possessions. If we may believe the accounts which have been transmitted to us, he sought to drown the voice of his conscience in scenes of merriment and debauchery. At Rouen, amidst a gay and voluptuous court, he affected to laugh at the progress of the confederates, and openly boasted that in one day he would teach them to regret the success of a whole year. Thus while his strongest defences were crumbling around him, the infatuated monarch appeared to slumber secure in the lap of pleasure, till the reduction of Radipont, in the vicinity of Rouen, awakened him from his lethargy, and induced him to flee with precipitation to England.¹⁵

Perhaps, if it were possible to consult some contemporary historian, we might discover the true reason of John's inactivity. He certainly did not acquiesce in his loss with indifference. He complained loudly of the perfidy of his opponents: he reclaimed the intervention of the

Solicits
the aid of
the pope.

¹⁵ Paris, 175. West. 265.

CHAP. pope, to compel Philip by ecclesiastical cen-
 I. sures to observe his oaths; ¹⁶ and he raised

¹⁶ Innocent entered warmly into the cause, and appointed the archbishop of Bourges, and the abbot of Casamaggiore his legates to *decide* the controversy between the two kings. But what right had he to interfere in this authoritative manner? The reader shall learn from one of his letters, which shews, more plainly than any speculations of modern writers, the real ground on which the popes assumed their pretended authority in temporal matters.—He first transcribes the following passage from the gospel: “if thy brother “trespass against thee, go and tell him his fault, between him and “thee alone . . . and if he will not hear thee, then take with thee “one or two more . . . and if he shall neglect to hear them, tell it “unto the church: but if he neglect to hear the church, let him be “unto thee as an heathen man, and a publican” Matt. xviii. 15—17. “Now,” he proceeds, “the king of England maintains that the “king of France by enforcing the execution of an unjust sentence, “has trespassed against him. He has therefore admonished him “of his fault in the manner prescribed by the gospel: and meet- “ing with no redress, has, according to the direction of the same “gospel, appealed to the church. How then can we, whom di- “vine providence has placed at the head of the church, refuse to “obey the divine command? How can we hesitate to proceed ac- “cording to the form pointed out by Christ himself? . . . We do “not arrogate to ourselves the right of judgment as to the fee: that “belongs to the king of France. But we have a right to judge re- “specting the sin; and that right it is our duty to exercise against “the offender, be he who he may . . . By the imperial law it has “been provided, that if one of two litigant parties prefer the judg- “ment of the apostolic see to that of the civil magistrate (Apud “Grat. caus. ii. 9. 1. can. 35), the other shall be bound to submit “to such judgment. But if we mention this, it is not that we found “our jurisdiction on any civil authority. God has made it our duty “to reprehend the man who falls into mortal sin, and if he neglect “our reprehension, to compel him to amend by ecclesiastical cen- “sures. Moreover both kings have sworn to observe the late treaty “of peace: and yet Philip has broken that treaty. The cognizance “of perjury is universally allowed to belong to the ecclesiastical “courts. On this account, therefore, we have also a right to call

forces and money both in England and Ireland to carry on the war. Probably neither his foreign nor English barons were true to his interests. Many of the former he punished by the forfeiture of their lands in England, and of the latter by exacting from them a seventh of their income. Yet when he had collected a numerous army at Portsmouth, they unanimously informed him by the mouth of archbishop Hubert, that they would not embark.¹⁷

At length, after a siege of several months, and when the garrison had been reduced by the casualties of war, and the ravages of famine, to less than two hundred men, the gallant Roger de Lacy surrendered Chateau Gaillard to the king of France. Falaise, a place equally strong, and the bulwark of lower Normandy, was given up by the treachery of Lupercaire the governor, who with his mercenaries entered into the service of Philip. Still the citizens of Rouen, Arques, and Verneuil, animated by an hereditary hatred of the French, resolved to oppose the invaders ; concluded a league for their common defence ; and implored by messengers the aid of the king of England. Rouen was soon invested : a refusal of assistance from John threw the citi-

Loses Nor-
mandy.
1204.
Mar. 6.

“ the parties before our tribunal.” Cap. Novit. 13. de judiciis. The importance of this extract must plead for its length. It is needless to add, that the pope’s reasons did not convince the king, or the clergy of France, and that the mission of the two legates was totally useless.

¹⁷ Paris, 175, 176. West. 265.

CHAP.

I.

June 1.

zens into despair: and an offer of conditional submission was made to the French king. It was stipulated that unless a peace should be concluded, or the enemy be driven from the walls within thirty days, Philip should be admitted as immediate lord of Rouen, and the citizens should continue to enjoy their accustomed immunities. Arques and Verneuil accepted the same terms; and, in like manner, opened their gates on the appointed day: Anjou, Maine, and Touraine followed the example of Normandy; and thus by the guilt, or indolence, or bad fortune of John were these extensive and opulent provinces re-annexed to the French crown after a separation of two hundred and ninety-two years.¹⁸

Attempts
to recover
it.

1206.
July 10.
Aug. 1.

But, if the king had neglected to preserve, he seemed resolved to recover, his transmarine territories. Guy de Thouars began to fear the preponderance of Philip: and a confederacy was formed between him and John, who at the head

¹⁸ Paris, 173. West. 265, 266. Duchesne, *Scrip. Norm.* 1037. —The coin had been much diminished in weight during the last reigns: and in a great council held in October it was enacted, that in loans of money and transactions between merchants, no pennies should pass but such as were of full weight. But for the relief of the poor it was also determined, that in the markets for the purchase of provisions and clothing, the ancient coin, if it had not lost more than one eighth of its weight, should be a lawful tender: a regulation which would probably have no other effect than to raise the price of such articles. Another coinage was to be issued in the beginning of the year, and whoever was found to have any new pennies in his possession that had been clipt or filed, was to forfeit his goods and chattels to the king. *Leg. Sax.* 360.

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I.

of an English army, disembarked at Rochelle. He immediately invested the castle of Montauban, and was able to boast that he had reduced in a few days a fortress which Charlemagne had not taken in seven years. He proceeded to Angers, and once more burnt that unfortunate city. But from this state of exertion his mind relapsed into its usual irresolution and apathy. He raised the siege of Nantes to offer battle to Philip: when the armies came within sight, he proposed a negotiation; and as soon as the negotiation was opened, slunk away with his army, and returned to England. Philip affected to resent the transaction: but at the earnest solicitation of the pope's legate consented to an armistice for two years.¹⁹

Dec. 12.

This unfortunate contest with the French king was followed by another with the Roman pontiff, differing indeed in its object, but equally disgraceful in its result. The reader has seen that our kings at their coronation promised upon oath to maintain the immunities of the church, among which was numbered the right claimed by the chapters of choosing their prelates. It was a right, however, which the prince viewed with jealousy, and which he invaded without difficulty. The bishoprics offered the cheapest means of remunerating the clergymen in his service; and, as the baronies annexed to them

Election of bishops.

¹⁹ Paris, 130. West. 267.

CHAP.

I.

gave their possessors considerable influence in the state, his interest demanded that they should not be bestowed on his enemies. Hence, while he permitted the form of election to exist, he was in general careful to retain the real nomination in his own power. It was required that the choice of the chapter should be preceded by the royal licence, which afforded the king the opportunity of recommendation; and that it should be followed by the presentment of the bishop elect for his approval, which allowed him in reality the exercise of a veto. Thus far, however, the practice in England was conformable to the practice of most christian countries: in one point it differed from that of all others. Several of the cathedral churches had been originally settled in monasteries, and still continued to be served by monks, who claimed and exercised all the rights of the chapters: a singular and incongruous institution, since it referred the choice of the bishops to men, who by their utter seclusion from the world were the least calculated to appreciate the merits of the candidates, or to judge of the qualifications requisite for the office.

With respect to the other sees this interference of the monks was perhaps of minor importance: but the archbishop of Canterbury enjoyed so elevated a station in church and state, that his election interested both the king and the prelates. The latter, grounding their pre-

tensions on the more ancient discipline, claimed a right, if not of exclusive, at least of concurrent, election: but that right was fiercely denied by the monks of Christchurch, whose priors on more than one occasion protested that they would rather lose their lives, than acquiesce in the violation of the most glorious of their privileges. At the death of each archbishop the contest began: and both parties had recourse to every expedient which policy could suggest. The king always confederated with the prelates: but the monks fought their own battle with spirit and perseverance. To subdue their obstinacy, threats and promises and flattery were employed: that they might be weakened by separation, the place of election was often fixed at a distance, where the right could be exercised by a few only acting in the name of the whole body: and the object of their choice, unless he were the person recommended by the king, and elected by the bishops, was uniformly refused. Still, though they might ultimately be compelled to yield, they always yielded in such manner, as not to acknowledge, by their acquiescence, the exercise of the right claimed by the prelates.²⁰ These preliminary notices were re-

²⁰ See the elections of Theobald (Gervase, 1313), of St. Thomas (Id. 1382), of Richard (Id. 1423. 1425), of Baldwin (Id. 1304. 1306. 1468—1474), and of Hubert (Id. 1583, 1584).

CHAP.

I.

1205.
July 13.
Election of
Reginald.

quisite, that the reader may fully understand the nature of the controversy which will follow.

As soon as the death of archbishop Hubert was known, the junior part of the monks assembled clandestinely in the night, and placed Reginald, their sub-prior, on the archiepiscopal throne. To this election they were aware that a strong opposition would be made. They had not asked the royal licence; and had proceeded without the concurrence of the episcopal body. Their only hope of success depended on the approbation of the apostolic see. Reginald was accordingly sent to Rome: but the motive of his journey was anxiously concealed; and an oath was exacted that he would not divulge the secret, till he had sounded the mind of the pontiff. But the vanity of the monk subdued his prudence: and he was no sooner out of the English territory, than he assumed the title of archbishop elect. The wiser part of the brotherhood, foreseeing the difficulties, into which they would be precipitated by this rash and informal act, resolved to disregard the choice, which had been made of Reginald, as invalid; and asked the requisite permission to proceed to an open and legitimate election. As soon as it arrived, they chose, according to the royal recommendation, John de Gray, bishop of Norwich. He was enthroned in the king's presence, and immediately received from John possession of the

And of the
bishop of
Norwich.

archbishopric. A deputation of twelve monks was sent to support his cause at the court of Rome.²¹ CHAP.
I.

The first care of Innocent on their arrival was to decide the controversy between the monks and the bishops. In favour of the latter it was urged, that according to the ancient discipline the metropolitan ought to be chosen by the bishops of the province, and that since the freedom of canonical election had been restored by Henry I. they had always concurred in the choice of the primate. The monks replied, that the innovations which had been made under the Norman dynasty, were founded on force, and not on right: that during the four preceding centuries the election of the archbishop had been the exclusive privilege of their body; and that to reject their claim would be to condemn the fathers of the English church, and to annul the decisions of former pontiffs. After a long and patient hearing, the consistory was of opinion, that a privilege built on the prescription of ages, ought to be respected: and Innocent pronounced a definitive sentence in favour of the monks.²²

The claims of the two pretenders to the primacy were next examined, and the result was equally unfavourable to both. The election of Reginald was annulled, because it was contrary

Right of
election
given to
themonks.
1206.

Nov. 20.

Reginald
and bishop
of Nor-
wich re-
jected.
1207.

²¹ Paris, 178, 179. West, 266.

²² Paris, 130. West, 266.

CHAP.

I.

to the canonical form: that of the bishop of Norwich, because it was made before the nullity of the former had been definitively pronounced. This decision, which was in conformity with the jurisprudence of the age, had been foreseen: and the king had granted the deputies, before their departure, the permission to proceed to a new election, but at the same time had bound them on oath to choose John de Gray. It unfortunately happened that the pontiff had strong objections to his promotion. John was the confidential adviser of the monarch, one of his justiciaries, and so occupied with the administration of temporal affairs, that he had little leisure to attend to the spiritual government of his diocese. This was indeed an abuse, which had long prevailed in the English church, and had been severely condemned by several pontiffs. Innocent himself had compelled Hubert, the last primate, to retire from the government of the kingdom to the care of his diocese: nor could he now without inconsistency allow another minister to be placed on the archiepiscopal throne. Three thousand marks were offered to purchase his acquiescence: but he spurned the bribe with indignation, and adhered inflexibly to his purpose.

Langton
chosen.

There was at this time at Rome an Englishman of eminence, by name Stephen de Langton. He had taught with applause in the schools of Paris; and his merit had been re-

CHAP.

I.

warded with the chancellorship of that university, and with church preferment in England. His reputation had recommended him to Innocent, who invited him to Rome, and honoured him with the purple. It was on Langton that the pope fixed his eyes as a proper person for the future archbishop : and it is plain that in making the selection he was actuated by the purest motive, that of placing at the head of the English church a prelate of indisputable science and virtue. He had even reason to flatter himself that the choice would not be disagreeable to John, who had frequently written to the cardinal in terms of the highest esteem. To obviate, however, all probable objections, he not only sent to request the king's permission that the monks might make the election at Rome, but when Stephen had been elected, dispatched other envoys to solicit his approbation of the prelate elect. His letters, however, were detained at Dover ; no answer was returned : and the cardinal, after a decent but fruitless delay, was consecrated at Viterbo by Innocent himself. June 17. It may have been imprudent and indecorous to force a prelate on the king without waiting for his consent : but it must be confessed that the whole proceeding was conducted according to the canons which at the time obtained the force of law, and with an attention to John's honour which was not usual at the court of Rome.²³

²³ Paris, 137. 139. West. 267, 268. Langton's title was cardinal of St. Chrysogonus.

CHAP.

I.

Rejected
by the
king.

The bishop of Norwich, however, was unwilling to resign the object of his ambition; and by his interested councils plunged his master into a contest, to which, in his present depressed state, he was evidently unequal. No sooner was the consecration of Langton announced, than John wreaked his vengeance on the monks. They had been the cause of his disappointment, first by their furtive election of Reginald, and secondly by their perfidious choice of Langton. A body of armed men drove them from their convent, compelled them to cross the sea, and took possession of their lands for the crown. Innocent, by soothing letters, endeavoured to mollify the king's resentment. He expatiated on the virtues and talents of the new primate; claimed the praise of moderation, for having waived his own right, and solicited the assent and approbation of the king; and promised, if John would acquiesce, to take care that the past transaction should not be converted into a precedent injurious to the prerogatives of the English crown. But the obstinacy of the monarch was not to be softened: he replied in terms of hostility and defiance; and avowed his determination that Langton should never set a foot in England in the character of primate.

The inter-
dict.

The die was now cast; and the quarrel became a trial of strength between the power of the king and that of the pontiff. By the order of Innocent the bishops of London, Ely, and Worcester, waited on John, explained to him

the nature of the censures to which he was exposed, and besought him on their knees to accept of the new archbishop. Though he had seen a greater prince than himself, the king of France, reduced to submit by the operation of an interdict, he was inexorable. He interrupted them with oaths and insults, derided the resentment of the pontiff, poured out the most cruel menaces against the clergy, and drove the bishops ignominiously from his presence. The middle of Lent was suffered to pass: John continued in his former resolution: Passion Sunday arrived; and on the next day the three prelates pronounced the sentence of interdict against all the king's dominions. To evade his resentment, they immediately fled to the continent.²⁴

Mar. 23.

Its origin.

The interdict was a form of ecclesiastical punishment unknown in the first ages of christianity. Some faint traces of it may be discovered about the year 560:²⁵ but it was not before the eleventh century that its use became frequent, or that its nature and effects were accurately defined.—After the death of Charlemagne, the different nations of Europe groaned under the oppression of warlike nobles, whose rapacity respected neither the sanctity of the altar, nor the rights of

²⁴ Paris, 188, 189, 190. West, 268. Other bishops retired into Scotland. The bishop of Norwich was made lord deputy in Ireland: so that only one prelate remained in England, the bishop of Winchester. Chron. Duns. 52.

²⁵ Greg. Turon. Hist. Fran. viii. 31.

CHAP.

I.

humanity: and to restrain the ferocity of these numerous tyrants, the clergy adopted every expedient which religion could furnish, or ingenuity could suggest. In a synod held at Lymoges on one of these occasions, the abbot Odolric proposed to make trial of an interdict. "Till the nobles," said he, "cease from their ravages, do you forbid the celebration of mass, the solemnities of marriage, and the burial of the dead. Let the churches be stript of their ornaments, and the faithful observe the abstinence of Lent." The advice was followed: the detestation of the people, who were thus deprived of the exercise of their religion, confounded and alarmed their oppressors; and the success of the experiment recommended the interdict to the clergy as the most powerful obstacle which they could oppose to the violence of their enemies.²⁶

And
effects.

The bishops had no sooner pronounced the sentence, than its effects were universally felt. The churches were instantly closed: no bell was tolled; no service was solemnly performed: the administration of the sacraments, except to infants and to the dying, was prohibited; and the bodies of the dead were silently buried in unconsecrated ground.²⁷ Though this sudden extinction of the

²⁶ Con. gen. ix. 902. Ivo of Chartres calls it *remedium insolitum*. Ep. 94.

²⁷ Marriages were performed, and women were churched, at the church door. The people were also called together on the Sundays to hear sermons and prayers in the churchyards. Chron. Duns. 51.

CHAP.

I.

forms and aids of religion struck the people with horror, John amid the general gloom affected an air of serenity and even of cheerfulness. His mind was employed in devising plans of revenge. He apprehended the relations of the three bishops, threw them into prison, and confiscated their property. His officers took possession of all ecclesiastical revenues; and commanded the sufferers to quit the kingdom, and seek redress from the justice or pity of the pontiff. In general they were too wise to depart; and contrived to subsist on the pittance, which they obtained from the benevolence of their friends, or extorted from the commiseration of their adversaries.²⁸

For some years John appeared to despise the consequences of the interdict: and his cause derived a temporary lustre from the success, which attended his arms. 1. Soon after his coronation he had summoned William king of Scotland to meet him at Lincoln. The Scottish prince was received with the accustomed honours; and on an eminence at a small distance from the city, in presence of the whole court and of an immense concourse of people, he did homage to the king, and swore fealty to him of life, and limb, and worldly honours against all men, saving his own right. As soon as he had risen from his knees, he demanded that right: namely, the three counties of Northumberland, Cumberland, and West-

John's
successes.

Scotland.
1240.
Nov. 22.

²⁸ Paris, 190. West. 263.

CHAP.

I.

1209.
June 28.

moreland, which he claimed as the heir of his grandfather David, by whom they had been seized during the civil wars between Matilda and Stephen. John eluded the demand by promising to return an answer at his leisure;²⁹ and received from William a charter, in which that prince is said, by a contemporary writer, to have acknowledged the feudal superiority of the English crown, to have engaged to keep the peace of the king and kingdom, and to have bound himself not to marry his son without the permission of his liege lord.³⁰ They separated friends in appearance, but enemies at heart: and nine years of doubtful tranquillity intervened before they met again on the banks of the Tweed. Whether it was that William had offered an asylum to the English rebels, or that he had attempted to marry his son or his daughter without licence, the resentment of John was kindled, and he encamped at the head of a numerous army in the vicinity of Norham. The Scottish prince saw that it was safer to appease, than to provoke a superior enemy. Instead of his son, who had been demanded, he gave his two daughters to the custody of John; submitted to a fine of fifteen thousand marks as the price of "the good-will of his lord;" and

²⁹ Hov. 461. Henry III., John's son, in a letter to the pope, asserted that this was liege homage for the crown of Scotland.—Rym. i. 334, 335.

³⁰ Brompton, 1233, 1284.

left several noblemen as hostages for the payment of the money.³¹

CHAP.
I.

Ireland.

2. From Scotland the king directed his attention to the concerns of the sister island. From a letter which he wrote to the justiciary Meyler Fitz-Henry, it appears that Cathal king of Connaught, by Dermot his envoy, had offered to hold his kingdom of John by the annual payment of one hundred marks for one third part as a barony, and of three hundred marks for the remaining two parts.³² With the issue of the negotiation we are not acquainted: but that which principally required the interference of the king, was the lawless conduct of the English chieftains, who disobeyed his orders, and levied war on each other. With a powerful army he landed in Ireland, and proceeded to Dublin, where twenty of the native princes hastened to do him homage. From Dublin he marched into Meath: the castles of the refractory barons were reduced: and the Lacies with their associates precipitately quitted the island. John divided the English province into counties, established the observance of the English laws among the settlers, ordered the same monies to pass equally in both countries, intrusted the government to his favourite, the bishop of Norwich; and after an absence of twelve weeks returned with expedition to Eng-

1210.
June 6.

Aug. 30.

³¹ Paris, 191. Ann. Marg. 14. Hemingf. 556. Rym. i. 155. ii. 564. 886.

³² Apud Brady, ii. App. 165.

CHAP. land.³³ 3. The next year he undertook to chastise the incursions of the Welsh; and at the foot of Snowdon dictated to Llewellyn the terms of his submission. He received from him twenty-eight hostages, young men of noble descent: all of whom the next year forfeited their lives on the gallows, in consequence of a new incursion of their perfidious countrymen.³⁴

I.
Wales.
1211.
Aug. 14.

Yet, while the king thus triumphed over his enemies, he still looked with solicitude to the termination of his quarrel with Innocent, and laboured to ward off the blow, which he well knew was meditated against him. With this view he often commenced a negotiation with Langton, or the papal envoys; and as often, with his usual versatility, refused to perform what he had promised. On other points all parties seemed to agree: the great subject of difference was the restitution to be made of the monies which had been forcibly taken from the clergy. The pontiff proceeded with deliberation, and allowed his disobedient son time to repent. When the interdict had lasted a year, he fulminated against him a bull of excommunication: but the king maintained so rigorous a watch at the ports, that the sentence could not be officially published in England: and his theologians maintained that, till it were published, it could have no effect. But this partial

He is ex-
communi-
cated.
1209.
Nov.

³³ Paris, 193. Ann. Marg. 14. Hemingf. 556. Ann. Hibern. apud Camd. Ann. 1210.

³⁴ Paris, 193, 194. Ann. Marg. 15.

advantage did not allay his apprehensions. Ex-communication, he well knew, was only a prelude to the sentence of deposition : there could not be a doubt that Philip, his ancient foe, would seize the opportunity to invade his dominions : and the increasing disaffection of his barons added to his perplexity and danger. To check therefore the hostility of the king of France, he retained in his service several of the petty princes, whose territories lay on the north or south of the limits of that kingdom : and to fortify himself against the pope, he solicited the aid of Mohammed al Nassir, who had assumed the usual appellation of the emir al Moumenim, and by his conquests in Spain had threatened to extirpate christianity from the south of Europe. This secret negotiation was intrusted to the prudence of two knights, Thomas Hardington and Ralf Fitz-Nicholas, and of a clergyman called Robert of London. On their arrival at the palace of the Moor, they were successively conducted through several apartments lined with guards, whose arms, manners, and apparel, excited the wonder of the strangers. The emir himself, a man of moderate stature and grave aspect, kept his eyes fixed on a book lying before him. Having made their reverences, they presented John's letter, which was received and translated by an interpreter. It contained, if we may believe the report which was afterwards circulated, an offer of the English crown to the emir, and a pro-

CHAP.

I.

mise on the part of John to embrace the mohammedan faith. In this there is probably much exaggeration: but it would be difficult to determine the precise limits at which the desperation of a prince would stop, who with John's disposition should find himself in John's circumstances. The emir put to the envoys several pertinent questions, respecting the population and strength of the kingdom, the age, prospects, and character of the king: and dismissed them with general unmeaning expressions of amity. But as they retired, he recalled Robert, and adjured him, by his respect for the christian faith, to say what kind of a man his master was. He honestly replied that John was a tyrant, and would soon be deposed by his subjects. This was the only audience which they obtained. At their return the king gave to Robert, as the reward of his services, the custody of the abbey of St. Alban's during the interdict: a charge from which he contrived to collect for his own use above a thousand marks.³⁵

³⁵ Some writers have rejected this story: but it rests on the best authority, that of Paris, a monk of the same monastery, who heard Robert relate it to his companions. But I have ventured to remove it from the place, which it occupies in his history, and to insert it here for two reasons. 1. Because it occurred during the interdict (Paris, Hist. 205. Vit. Abbat. 1044). 2. It happened before the great battle of Muradel, which broke the power of the emir, in 1212 (Paris, Hist. 206. Annal. Waverl. 176). It is inserted at the proper time in his lives of the abbots of St. Alban's p. 1041.

Four years at length elapsed, and the king's obstinacy was still unsubdued. The archbishop and other prelates presented to the pope a strong remonstrance, in which they described their own wrongs and those of the clergy and religious, John's cruelties and impenitence, and the necessity of more powerful measures to preserve the privileges, and punish the enemy, of the church. Innocent with apparent unwillingness had recourse to the last effort of his authority. He absolved the vassals of John from their oaths of fealty, and exhorted all christian princes and barons to unite in dethroning an impious king, and in substituting another more worthy, by the authority of the apostolic see.³⁶

And de-
posed by
the pope.
1213.

³⁶ Paris, 195. The reader has seen that Innocent grounded his temporal pretensions on the right which he possessed of judging of sin, and of the obligations of oaths (See note 16). This doctrine, hostile as it might be to the independence of sovereigns, was often supported by the sovereigns themselves. Thus when Richard I. was held in captivity by the emperor, his mother Eleanor repeatedly solicited the pontiff to procure his liberation by the exercise of that authority, which he possessed over all temporal princes. Rym. i. 72—73. Thus also John himself had, as we have seen, invoked the aid of the same authority to recover Normandy from the king of France. At first, indeed, the popes contented themselves with spiritual censures : but in an age, when all notions of justice were modelled after the feudal jurisprudence, it was soon admitted that princes by their disobedience became traitors to God : that as traitors they ought to forfeit their kingdoms, the fees which they held of God : and that to pronounce such sentence belonged to the pontiff, the vicergerent of Christ upon earth. By these means the servant of the servants of God became the sovereign of the sovereigns, and assumed the right of judging them in his court, and of transferring their crowns as he thought just.

CHAP.
 I.
 Philip pre-
 pares to
 invade
 England.

John, however, might have laughed at the impotent resentment of Innocent, had no monarch been found willing to undertake the execution of the sentence. The pope applied to the king of France; and Philip lent a ready ear to proposals so flattering to his ambition.³⁷ A numerous army was summoned to meet at the mouth of the Seine: and the hopes of the invaders were strengthened by the promise of co-operation from some of the English barons. Neither did John remain an idle spectator of the storm which was gathering. By his orders every ship in his dominions capable of carrying six horses, Apr. 1. was collected in the harbour of Portsmouth: and the sheriffs of each county summoned to the coast of Kent, under the penalty of culver- tage, every man able to bear arms within the Apr. 15. limits of their jurisdiction.³⁸ The fleet sailed across the channel, captured a squadron at the mouth of the Seine, destroyed the ships in the harbour of Fecamp, and burnt the town of Dieppe. But the army was too numerous for any useful purpose. All who were not bound by oath to provide themselves with a coat of

³⁷ Paris, 195.

³⁸ *Omnes liberos homines et servientes, vel quicumque sint, et de quocumque teneant, qui arma habere debent, vel possint, et qui homagium nobis vel ligantiam fecerunt.* Par. 196. Of these such as had no land, were to serve at the king's expense.—Culvertage means in plain English the penalty of being a turn-tail. The culprit was liable by law to the forfeiture of all property, and perpetual servitude.

mail, or breastplate of iron, or a doublet protected with iron scales, were remanded: and in a few days another reduction was found necessary, from the difficulty of supplying provisions for the multitude which remained.³⁹ Still the king kept under his banners sixty thousand men, "sufficient," says the historian, "to have defied all the powers of Europe, had they been animated with love for their sovereign." But the infatuated prince had laboured, during the whole contest, to alienate the affections of his subjects. The instances which are recorded of his despotism and lust, almost exceed belief. This at least is certain, that he had revived in all their severity the odious laws respecting the royal forests, imposed the most arbitrary and oppressive taxes,⁴⁰ troubled and disgraced by the violence and licentiousness of his amours the most noble families, and by his suspicions and precautions, by demanding at one time the security of hostages, and exacting at others the surrender of castles, had converted the most powerful barons into implacable enemies.

³⁹ Chron. Dunst. 59.

⁴⁰ Besides his exactions from the laity he had at his return from Ireland exacted 40,000*l.* from the Cistercian, and 100,000*l.* from the other monks. Par. 193. There appears some exaggeration in these sums. The *Annales Waverlienses* reduce the 40,000 to 33,300, and those of Margan to 27,000. He had, however, the policy or cruelty to make all the religious houses give him charters in which they declared that the monies extorted by him since his accession were free gifts, for which they did not expect to be repaid. Ann. Waver. 173.

CHAP. I. Among the sixty thousand men arrayed for his defence, there was hardly one on whose fidelity he could depend.⁴¹

King reconciled.

May 13.

While the king lay at Dover, revolving the probable issue of the contest, he was visited by Pandulf, the confidential minister of the pope, who in an artful speech endeavoured to work on his fears and suspicions. Pandulf described in lively colours his dangerous situation, exaggerated the power and projects of the king of France, and darkly hinted at the discontent and disloyalty of the English barons. During his speech the king's mind was agitated by different passions. If pride and resentment forbade him to yield, fear and superstition taught him to wish for a compromise. He was fully aware of the danger which threatened him: he knew that in his army the perfidy of some was certain, the loyalty of all was doubtful. Last year, when he marched to Chester to attack the rebellious Welsh, he had defeated the plans of the conspirators by suddenly disbanding his army, and sheltering himself within the castle of Nottingham:⁴² at present to adopt a similar expedient would be to seal the act of his deposition. But what on a mind so weak and superstitious made the most alarming impression, was the prediction of Peter the

⁴¹ Paris, 196, 197.

⁴² Paris, 194. Ann. Marg. 15. It was rumoured that the barons had conspired to place the celebrated Simon of Montfort on the throne. Chron. Dunstap. 57.

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hermit, that before the feast of the ascension should be past (it wanted but three days to the fatal term), John would have ceased to reign. After a long struggle and with evident reluctance he subscribed an instrument, which he had on a former occasion rejected. By this it was stipulated, that Langton should be admitted to the archbishopric of Canterbury; that the exiles both clergy and laity should be restored to their lands and offices; that all persons imprisoned on account of the late quarrel, should be liberated; that all outlawries should be reversed, and a promise given that such judgments should no longer be pronounced against the clergy; that full restitution should be made for monies unlawfully seized, and injuries wantonly inflicted; and that on the fulfilment of these conditions the sentences of interdict and excommunication should be revoked, and the exiled bishops should swear at the king's pleasure to be true and faithful subjects. Four of the most powerful barons guaranteed with their oaths the performance of these stipulations on the part of John.⁴³

This happened on the thirteenth of May. The next day was spent by John, his council, and the papal minister, in secret and anxious consultation. On the following morning, in the church of the templars, and in the pre-

Swears
fealty to
the pope.
May 15

⁴³ Paris, 197. Rym. i. 170.

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I.

sence of Pandulf, the king, surrounded by the prelates, barons, and knights, took in the usual manner an oath of fealty to the pope; the very same oath, which vassals took to their lords. He swore that he would be faithful to God, to the blessed Peter, to the Roman church, to pope Innocent, and to Innocent's rightful successors: that he would not by word, or deed, or assent, abet their enemies to the loss of life, or limb, or liberty: that he would keep their counsel, and never reveal it to their injury: and that he would aid them to the best of his power, to preserve and defend against all men the patrimony of St. Peter, and especially the two kingdoms of England and Ireland.⁴⁴ At the same time, to complete the transactions of this extraordinary day, he put into the hands of the envoy a charter subscribed by himself, one archbishop, one bishop, nine earls, and two barons. This instrument testified, that the king as an atonement for his offences against

⁴⁴ It is generally supposed that the king did homage to Pandulf as the pope's representative. But this is not mentioned by any ancient writer, and is contradicted by the king's charter, in which he says that he swears fealty according to the form subjoined, and will do homage, whenever he shall actually be in the presence of the pope: *fidelitatem secundum subscriptam formam facimus et juramus, et homagium ligenum in presentia domini Pape, si coram eo esse poterimus, facimus.*—Paris says this was done in consequence of a sentence passed at Rome, *juxta quod Romæ fuerat sententiatum*, p. 193. But the contrary is evident from Innocent's correspondence. See *Regist. Inn. III. fol. 151 et seq.*

God and the church, had determined to humble himself, in imitation of Him, who for our sake had humbled himself even unto death: that he had, therefore, not through fear or force, but of his own free-will, and with the unanimous consent of his barons, granted to God, to the holy apostles Peter and Paul, to pope Innocent, and Innocent's rightful successors, the kingdom of England and the kingdom of Ireland, to be held of him and of the Roman church in fee, by the annual rent of one thousand marks, with the reservation to himself and his heirs of the administration of justice, and the peculiar rights of the crown.⁴⁵ The next day, the feast of the ascension, the period fixed by the hermit, was to the king a day of anxiety and suspense. As soon as it was passed, he condemned Peter and his son as false prophets; and ordered them

⁴⁵ Paris, 199. Annal. Burt. 270. Regist. Auten. Inn. III. fol. 154. It was expressly provided, that besides the 1000 marks, the annual payment of the Peter-pence should be continued. It amounted to 199*l.* 3*s.* paid from the different dioceses in the following proportions, as I transcribed them ex Regist. Autent. Inn. III. in the Vatican library.

<i>l.</i>	<i>s.</i>		<i>l.</i>	<i>s.</i>		<i>l.</i>	<i>s.</i>
Canterbury	7 18	Lincoln	42 0	Hereford	6 0		
Recheſter	5 12	Cheſter	3 0	Bath	11 5		
London	16 10	Wincheſter	17 3	Salisbury	7 0		
Norwich	21 10	Oxford	9 5	Coventry	10 5		
Ely	5 0	Worceſter	10 5	York	11 10		

In a letter to his legate in England Innocent complains, that the real amount collected by the bishops was about 1000 marks more. Probably they retained for themselves the excess above the sum originally transmitted to Rome in the Saxon times. Rym. i. 182.

CHAP. I. to be dragged at the tails of horses, and hanged on gibbets. The justice of the sentence was denied by many, who contended that the king by swearing fealty to the pope, had verified their prediction.

Nature
and cause
of this
transac-
tion.

This transaction has heaped eternal infamy on the memory of John. Every epithet of reproach has been expended by writers and readers against the pusillanimity of a prince, who could lay the crown of England at the foot of a foreign priest, and receive it from him again as his vassal and tributary. It was certainly a disgraceful act: but there are some considerations, which, if they do not remove, will at least extenuate his offence. Though the principles of morality are unchangeable, our ideas of honour and infamy perpetually vary with the ever-varying state of society. To judge impartially of our ancestors, we are not to measure their actions by the standard of our present manners and notions: we should transport ourselves back to the age in which they lived; and take into the account their political institutions, their principles of legislation and government. ¹⁰ Now in the thirteenth century there was nothing so very degrading in the state of vassalage. It was the condition of most of the princes of christendom. Even the king of Scotland was the vassal of the king of England, and the king of England the vassal of the king of France; the one for the lands,

whatever they were, which he held of the English crown, the other for his transmarine territories: and both were frequently seen in public on their knees, swearing fealty, and doing homage to their feudal superiors. John himself had been present when William the lion subjected the Scottish crown to the English: and it was but nine years since Peter, the king of Arragon, had voluntarily become the vassal of Innocent, and bound himself and his successors to the yearly payment of two hundred and fifty ounces of gold to the holy see.⁴⁶ Nor were similar precedents wanting in his own family. He knew that his father Henry, powerful as he was, had become the feudatory of pope Alexander III.: and that his brother, the lion-hearted Richard, had resigned his crown to the emperor of Germany, and consented to hold it of him by the payment of a yearly rent. John in his distress followed these examples: and the result seems to have recommended his conduct to the imitation of the Scottish patriots, who, to defeat the claim of his grandson Edward I., acknowledged the pope for their superior lord, and maintained that Scotland had always been a fief of the church of Rome.⁴⁷

²⁰ Neither is the blame of this transaction to be confined to the king. It must be shared with him by the great council of the barons, his

⁴⁶ Zurita, Indicul. rer. Arrag. l. i. Trivet, 147.

⁴⁷ See chap. iii. of this volume.

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I.

constitutional advisers, the very men, who two years later extorted from him the grant of their liberties in the plain of Runnymede. The cession was made by their advice and with their consent : whence it may be fairly presumed that there was something in the existing circumstances, which would justify the king, as far as he was concerned. Some writers have imagined that their motive was the hope of averting the threatened invasion, or if it could not be averted, of at least preserving John on the throne by the intervention of the same power, which had so nearly precipitated him from it. There is, however, some reason to believe that it originated with the barons themselves who eagerly grasped at the opportunity of humbling the pride, and checking the violence, of the despot, whom they abhorred. From that moment they began to demand the grant of their liberties. On his refusal they appealed by their agents to the gratitude of the pope, now become his and their sovereign, reminding him that “ it was not to the good will of the “ king, but to them, and the compulsion which “ they had employed, that he was indebted for “ his superiority over the English crown.” ⁴⁸

⁴⁸ Quod vos annuum redditum domino Papæ et ecclesiæ Romanæ concessistis, et alios honores quos ecclesiæ Romanæ exhibitistis non sponte, nec ex devotione, imo ex timore, *et per eos coactus* fecistis. This passage appears to me decisive of the part taken by the barons. It is contained in a private letter to John from his

Innocent, however, supported the cause of his vassal: and the barons transferred their allegiance to Louis, the son of Philip. The men, who could thus place on the throne the heir of the French monarchy, were certainly capable of subjecting it to the feudal control of the head of their church.

The transactions at Dover were soon known on the opposite side of the channel, and Pandulf himself hastened to detail the particulars to the king of France, who lay with a powerful army at Boulogne. At the news his hopes of acquiring the English crown, the dream of his ambition melted away: and his discontent exhausted itself in invectives against the selfish, perfidious policy of the pontiff. To his council he proposed to continue the enterprise; but was interrupted by Ferrand, earl of Flanders, a secret ally of the English monarch, who observed that he should not deem it a duty to follow his lord in an unjust expedition. These words excited a violent dispute: charges and recriminations were thrown from one to the other: and Philip closed the debate with a solemn declaration, that either Flanders should be annexed to the crown of France, or France should become a province of Flanders. Aware of his danger, the count immediately fled: Philip hastily followed his footsteps: Cassel, Ipres,

Philip
invades
Flanders.

agent at Rome (Rym. i. 185), who reports the assertions of the barons to the pontiff.

CHAP. and Bruges were reduced : and the French army
I. encamped under the walls of the strong city of
Ghent.

It was fortunate for Ferrand that the English navy lay at this moment in the harbour of Portsmouth, and was ready to put to sea. Seven hundred knights with a numerous body of infantry embarked on board of five hundred ships, and steered for the harbour of Swyne. The French fleet, which, according to the testimony of Rigord, the chaplain of Philip, amounted to more than thrice that number, had already arrived : but a part only could be admitted within the port of Damme ; and the remainder had been left without any protection by the troops, who were employed in plundering the neighbouring villages. This unexpected meeting was most fortunate for the English. The French mariners opposed but a feeble resistance : three hundred sail, laden with military stores and provisions, were captured : more than one hundred were burnt : and the others maintained a doubtful combat within the port, against their assailants and the inhabitants. The whole fleet might have been destroyed, had not the temerity of the English commander, William the Longsword, earl of Salisbury, and the king's illegitimate brother, induced him to divide his forces ; and by sending a part in pursuit of the plunderers, to prolong the contest till the French army arrived from Ghent. The English were

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I.

now driven to their ships with the loss of two thousand men : an advantage which, however, did not indemnify Philip for the former disaster. He had lost the means of supporting his army in Flanders, or of conveying it to England. He burnt Damme and the remains of his fleet : and after a short and inglorious campaign returned in sullen discontent to his own frontiers. Ferrand recovered his territory as far as St. Omer.⁴⁹

June.

The consequences of the transaction at Dover now began to unfold themselves. John had consented that the outlaws, both laity and clergy, should return to their native country : but, as little reliance could be placed on the word of the king, it had been stipulated that twenty-four barons should engage to protect them from insult or injury. Instruments to this effect had been executed and delivered to John : but, instead of transmitting, he retained them in his possession. He still cherished a lingering hope that some fortunate accident might enable him to break his engagements, and throw off the shackles with which he felt himself galled. The success of his fleet encouraged that hope. He forgot the conditions of the late pacification ; and, to carry the war into France, summoned all his retainers to meet him at Portsmouth. But when he ordered them to embark, the barons refused to obey, and insisted that he

Return of
the out-
laws.

⁴⁹ Paris, 199, 200. Chron. Dunst. 61. Rigord, 54.

CHAP. I. should previously recall the exiles. The king was compelled to acquiesce: and at his invitation Langton, the bishops of London, Ely, Hereford, Lincoln, and Bath, the prior and monks of Christchurch, and their companions, returned. They met at Winchester: John and the cardinal embraced: and the sentence of excommunication was publicly revoked at the entrance of the cathedral. But the archbishop had previously required him to repeat his oath of fealty to the pontiff, and to swear that he would abolish all illegal customs, restore to every man his rights, and revive the laws of the good king Edward: words of vague and uncertain import to the multitude, but sufficiently understood by the few, who had been initiated in the secret.⁵⁰

Council of
St. Alban's.

Aug. 4.

The king now hastened again to Portsmouth, ordered the troops to embark, and with a favourable wind set sail for the French coast. He reached the island of Jersey with a few ships: but found that none of the barons had followed him. They, under the plea that the time of their service was expired, had repaired to a council at St. Alban's, in which Fitz-Peter, the justiciary, presided. Their resolves were issued in the form of royal proclamations, which ordered the laws granted by Henry I. to be universally observed; and denounced capital punishment against the sheriffs, foresters, or offi-

⁵⁰ Paris, 201. Rym. i. 171, 172. Annal. Waver. 172.

cers of the king, who should exceed the strict line of their duty. If it be asked why the laws of Henry I. were substituted for those of Edward, the answer is easy. The latter could be collected only from the doubtful testimony of tradition: but it was assumed that they had been embodied in the charter, which Henry had granted at his accession.⁵¹

In the mean time John had landed, breathing revenge against the traitors, who had abandoned their sovereign. He determined to punish their disobedience by military execution: and had advanced as far as Northampton, when he was overtaken by the primate, who reminded him that it was the right of the accused to be tried and judged by their peers. "Rule you the church," replied the king, "and leave me to govern the state." He continued his march to Nottingham, and at Nottingham he was again assailed by Langton. That prelate repeated his former observations; asserted that the barons were ready to answer in the king's court; and concluded by declaring, that if John persisted to refuse them the justice of a trial, he should deem it his duty to excommunicate every person, with the exception of the king himself, who should engage in so impious a warfare. John yielded with reluctance, and for the sake

Langton
restrains
the king.

⁵¹ Paris, 201.

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I.

Council at
St. Paul's.

Aug. 25.

of form summoned the accused to appear on a certain day before him or his justices.⁵²

Three weeks had scarcely elapsed since the meeting at St. Alban's, when a second meeting was convened at St. Paul's in London. Its ostensible object was to ascertain the damages sustained by the outlaws during the late quarrel. But Langton called the barons aside, read to them the charter of Henry, and commented on its provisions. They answered by loud acclamations ; and the archbishop, taking advantage of their enthusiasm, administered to them an oath, by which they bound themselves to each other, to conquer or die in the defence of their liberties.⁵³

Interdict
removed

We shall now witness an important change in the politics of the pontiff. Hitherto he had supported the cause of the primate and barons : henceforth he will espouse the interests of the king. The cardinal Nicholas, bishop of Tusculum, arrived with the title of legate, and with instructions to settle the amount of the restitution to be made to the outlaws, and, when that was done, to take off the interdict. It was soon discovered that with much seeming impartiality, he inclined to the side of the king, who had again taken the oath of fealty to Innocent, and in addition, had done homage to the legate, as

Sep. 29.

Oct. 3.

⁵² Paris, 201.⁵³ Ibid. 202. Annal. Waver. 173.

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I.

Innocent's representative. Three successive assemblies were held without any result. The losses of the sufferers, whose property had been pillaged, woods felled, and houses burnt, were so enormous, that the king would not, perhaps could not, repair them. At length the demands of the inferior claimants were postponed : the payment of fifteen thousand marks relaxed the importunity of the prelates : and it was resolved by common consent, that the decision of the controversy should be referred to the equity of the pontiff. After hearing the arguments on both sides, Innocent gave an initiatory award, by which it was ordered that the king should pay to the bishops forty thousand marks, including the sums already received ; that he should give security for the discharge of any other damages to be hereafter awarded by the pontiff ; and that the interdict should be immediately recalled.⁵⁴

Dec. 6.

John, in the mean time, confident in the support of the pope, and unopposed by the contumacy of his barons, had sailed to the coast of Poitou, had been joined by the lords in the neighbourhood, and had penetrated to the city of Angers. There he was found by the messengers from Rome ; who, having received his oath that he would observe the papal award, hastened to England, and revoked the interdict,

Battle of
Bouvines1214.
June 17.

June 29.

⁵⁴ Paris, 207—210. Rym. i. 176. 187.

CHAP.

I.

after it had lasted more than six years. John immediately marched into Bretagne: but his progress was arrested by the arrival of Louis, the son of Philip: and from that moment both armies, as it were by mutual consent, suffered the war to linger, and waited the issue of the campaign in the north. There the allies of John, Otho, the emperor of Germany,⁵⁵ Ferrand, earl of Flanders, and William, earl of Boulogne, had joined the English forces under the earl of Salisbury, and hastened at the head of more than one hundred thousand men to invade the French territory. To this torrent Philip could not oppose half the number of combatants; but the deficiency was supplied by the spirit, and gallantry of his followers, the flower of the chivalry of France. The armies met at Bouvines, an obscure village on the river Marque, between Lisle and Tournay. Of the action which followed, so fatal to the prospects of John, so flattering to the vanity of Philip, I shall not

July 27.

⁵⁵ Otho was son to Henry the lion, duke of Saxony, and nephew to John. After the death of Henry VI., emperor of Germany, he opposed the claim of Philip, duke of Suabia, the brother of the deceased prince. After an unsuccessful war, he was freed from his competitor by the hand of an assassin, and obtained the imperial crown. By advancing pretensions which he had formerly abandoned, he incurred the resentment of Innocent, his former protector. He was excommunicated. Innocent and the king of France formed a league in favour of Frederic, son to Henry VI., who was crowned by the pontiff. Otho, unable to oppose his rival, retired to his patrimonial estates at Brunswick, and cheerfully entered into the league against his enemy, the French king.

pretend to give the details: a few anecdotes of the principal leaders may prove interesting to the reader. 1. Philip was at one time in the most imminent danger. Trusting to the temper of his armour, he had fearlessly rushed into the midst of the combatants. A German on foot, who espied an opening between his visor and cuirass, made a desperate push at his throat with a barbed lance. He missed his aim: but the hook caught the strap of the helmet, and the king was dragged from his horse. Though the soldier kept his hold, Philip rose on his feet. Otho hastened to overpower his enemy; while the French knights rushed forward to rescue their sovereign. After a desperate conflict he was disengaged, remounted his horse, and continued the battle. 2. The emperor could boast of having escaped from equal danger. He wielded with both hands a one-edged sword of enormous weight: and at each stroke stunned or unhorsed an opponent. During the battle he had three chargers killed under him. On one of these occasions, Du Barré, an athletic knight, seizing him round the waist, endeavoured to carry him off: nor was it without difficulty that he was liberated by the efforts of his guards. On another he received on his breast a stroke from a battle-axe, which was repelled by the strength of his cuirass. A second stroke wounded his horse on the head: and the animal, impatient of pain, wheeled round, and carried him

CHAP.

I.

out of the combat. 3. The earl of Salisbury chanced to meet the bishop of Beauvais. The captivity of that prelate had not extinguished his passion for fighting: but his only weapon was a club, that he might not, as he pretended, shed blood in violation of the canons. With a single stroke he brought the earl to the ground, and made him his prisoner. 4. The earl of Boulogne, out of respect for the Sunday, had proposed to defer the engagement to the morrow; and had been called a coward and traitor for his advice. When his companions fled, he refused to accompany them; fought till his horse was killed; and at last, unable to rise, surrendered to De Guerin, bishop elect of Senlis, who had refused to carry arms, but at the request of Philip had undertaken to marshal his forces, and to regulate their movements. 5. But the man whose captivity afforded the king the greatest pleasure, was the earl of Flanders, his inveterate enemy. He was wounded and taken. Philip conducted him to Paris, exposed him to the derision of the citizens, and confined him in a dungeon during the rest of his reign.⁵⁶

Proceed-
ings of the
barons.

Oct. 19.

The defeat at Bouvines broke all the measures of John, who solicited and obtained from Philip a truce for five years, and returned from an inglorious campaign in France to a still more

⁵⁶ See Paris, 211. Weston, 273. Rigord, 61. 63. Guil. Brit. Philip, l. x. xi.

inglorious contest in England. On the 20th of November the barons assembled at the abbey of St. Edmund's, under the pretence of celebrating the festival of the patron saint: their real object was to mature their plan of future operations, without awakening the suspicion of their sovereign. Many secret meetings were held: the different liberties for which they were to contend, were accurately defined: and it was determined to demand them in a body when the king should hold his court at the festival of Christmas. Before they separated, they advanced singly to the high altar, and took a solemn oath, to withdraw their allegiance, if John should reject their claims; and to levy war upon him, till he should grant them. At Christmas he was at Worcester; but whether he had received intelligence of their design, or was alarmed at the solitude of his court, he departed suddenly the next day, rode to London, and shut himself up in the Temple. The confederates followed in great numbers, and on the feast of the Epiphany presented their demands. The king at first assumed an air of superiority, and insisted not only that they should recede from such claims, but should assure him under their hands and seals that they would never make them again. The bishop of Winchester, the earl of Chester, and the lord William Brewer, consented: the others obstinately refused. He had then recourse to delay: and offered, on the security of the

Nov. 20.

1215.
Jan. 6.

CHAP.

I.

Grant to
the church
of free
election.
Jan. 15.

archbishop of Canterbury, the bishop of Ely, and the earl of Pembroke, to give them a satisfactory answer at the following Easter. This proposal after much hesitation, was accepted.⁵⁷

The interval was spent by the king in endeavours to fortify himself against this formidable conspiracy. To the clergy he granted a charter of free election, by which it was provided, that the custody of all cathedral, collegiate, and conventual churches, when they became vacant, should, as was usual, be vested in the crown: that whenever the royal licence to elect a new prelate was asked, it should be immediately granted, and that if it were refused, it should still be lawful to proceed to the election: that no influence should be used to prevent the electors from choosing whom they pleased: and that when the prelate elect was presented to the king, he should not refuse his approbation, unless lawful reasons could be assigned for the refusal. Having thus, as he hoped, mollified the clergy, he ordered the sheriffs to assemble the freemen of the different counties, and tender to them the oath of allegiance: and to obtain for himself the security, which the church gave to the crusaders, he took the cross, and engaged by vow to wage war against the infidels.⁵⁸

Feb. 2.

⁵⁷ Compare Paris, 212, 213, with the letter in Rymer, i. 181, 185. By some mistake it is placed among the records of the year 1214, but evidently relates to transactions of 1215.

⁵⁸ Paris, 213, 221. Rym. i. 193. I ought perhaps to have men-

CHAP.
I.Pope re-
prehends
the barons.

Mar. 19.

Both parties had dispatched messengers to Rome, to solicit the protection of their feudal superior. But it was in vain that the barons appealed to the gratitude of Innocent: he deemed it his interest and duty to support the cause of his vassal. In a letter to Langton he inveighed against the injustice of refusing to John those rights, which had been peaceably possessed by the crown in the reigns of his father and brother; insinuated that the archbishop himself was accused of being the fomenter of the disturbance; and commanded him to exert all his authority to restore harmony between the king and his vassals. In another to the barons he rephended them for seeking to extort by violence, what they should have asked

tioned on a former occasion, the privileges, enjoyed by the crusaders. The first was an exemption from the obligation of doing canonical penance. The pilgrimage to Jerusalem was taken in commutation. But this indulgence, as it was called, was confined to the sole case, when the expedition had been undertaken from motives of piety alone. If the pilgrim had interest or honour in view, he was warned that he was still subject to the ancient discipline. *Quicunque pro sola devotione, non pro honoris aut pecunie adeptione, ad liberandam ecclesiam dei Hierusalem profectus fuerit, iter illud pro omni poenitentia ei reputetur.* Con. Claramon. can. ii.—The second privilege was, that till their return their persons, goods, and estates were placed under the protection of the church. It was, indeed, proper that persons who ventured their lives for a cause, which was deemed the cause of all christendom, should be exempt from vexatious exactions during their absence: but it was cruel to debar those who had just claims against the crusaders, from the prosecution of their rights during the same time. Many took the cross for the mere purpose of eluding the pursuit of their creditors, or of suspending the actions which had been commenced against them.

CHAP.

I.

as a favour ; and promised, if they would behave with moderation and humility, to interpose his good offices, and obtain for them from the king, whatever they could reasonably expect. In both he annulled by his own authority all confederacies formed since the pacification of Dover ; and forbade, under the penalty of excommunication, any such to be formed for the future.⁵⁹

Their demands.

In Easter week the barons assembled at Stamford, and with two thousand knights, their esquires and followers, proceeded to Brackley. The king lay at Oxford ; and commissioned the archbishop of Canterbury, and the earls of Pembroke and Warenne, to go and ascertain their demands. They brought him back a paper of the same import with that which had been presented to him before ; and, as soon as he had heard it read, he exclaimed : “ They might as well have demanded my crown. Do they think I will grant them liberties, which will make me a slave ? ”⁶⁰ The commissioners were remanded with instructions to appeal in the first place to the pope, the feudal lord of England, and protector of all who had taken the cross ; then to offer the abolition of the evil customs which had been introduced during his reign and that of his brother ; and, if this did not give satis-

⁵⁹ Rym. i. 184. 196, 197.

⁶⁰ It was probably the same instrument which is printed in the *Leges Saxonice*, p. 356. Ex. lib. MS. Vet. Arch. Cant.

faction, to add that he was also willing to be guided by the advice of his court with respect to any grievances which might have arisen during the time of his father Henry II. By the barons these proposals were received as mere evasions : and an answer was returned, that they would be content with nothing short of their original demands. Pandulf, and the bishop of Exeter, the king's advisers, contended that the primate was bound to excommunicate the barons in obedience to the order of the pontiff : but Langton replied that he was better acquainted with the intentions of Innocent ; and that unless the king dismissed the foreign troops, whom he had lately introduced into the kingdom, he should think it his duty to excommunicate them, and to oppose them with all his power. As a last resource, John offered to refer the matters in dispute to four persons to be chosen by the barons, four others to be chosen by himself, with the pope for the ninth ; and to abide by the decision of all or the major part of the umpires.⁶¹ This also was refused : the barons proclaimed themselves the army of God and his holy church ; and elected Robert Fitz-Walter for their commander. They immediately invested Northampton. Fourteen days were wasted in fruitless attempts to corrupt the fidelity of the

⁶¹ Compare Paris, 213, with John's account in his letter to the pope. Rymer, i. 200, 201.

CHAP.

I.

May 24.

King
yields at
Runny-
mead.

garrison, which consisted of foreigners : and to carry the fortress without military engines was a dangerous and hopeless task. At Bedford they were more fortunate. The governor opened the gates, and at the same moment an invitation was received from some of the principal citizens of the metropolis. They marched immediately ; halted not during the night ; and reached London in the morning. It was Sunday : the inhabitants were in the churches ; and the gates stood open. The city was immediately occupied : and the confederates, elated with their success, dispatched letters to the barons and knights, who had not hitherto declared themselves, stating their object, their resources, and their determination to treat as enemies all who did not join “ the army of God and of the holy church.” This menace had the intended effect. Those who were not convinced by their arguments, yielded to the fear of their resentment.⁶²

The loss of his capital proved to the king that his crown was now at stake. To retain it, he had submitted to become the vassal of a foreigner : for the same purpose, why should he not submit to the demands of his barons ? They might indeed require oaths and pledges : but in his estimation oaths ceased to bind, when they could be violated with impunity, and his heart was callous to the sufferings which his perfidy

⁶² Paris, 214.

might entail on his friends. He assumed an air of cheerfulness ; informed the confederates that he was ready to grant their petitions ; and requested them to name a day and a place for the conference. Runnymede, situated between Staines and Windsor, was the scene of this important negotiation. On the one side stood Fitz-Walter, and the majority of the barons and nobility of England : on the other sate the king, accompanied by eight bishops, Pandulf the papal envoy, and fifteen gentlemen. These attended as his trusty advisers : but the hostile sentiments of many were equally known to him and to his opponents. An instrument, containing the demands of the confederates, and distinguished by the title of the charter of liberties, was presented to John, and subscribed by him without hesitation. The knowledge, however, of his perfidy, had suggested the necessity of further securities. It was required that he should disband, and send out of the kingdom, every foreign officer with his family and followers : that for two months longer the barons should retain possession of the city, and the archbishop of the tower, of London : that a committee of twenty-five barons should be appointed with full power to decide all claims in conformity with the charter of liberties : that the freemen of every county should be at liberty to swear obedience to the committee of barons, and even to take up arms at their orders : and that if the king violated these conditions, the city and

CHAP. tower of London should be retained, and war
 I. might be lawfully levied against him. To these requests, galling as they were, John made no objections: and the barons, who had before “defied” him, that is, had publicly withdrawn their fealty, renewed their homage, and received from him again their estates and honours.⁶³

Contents
 of the
 charter.

This charter is celebrated in history as the supposed basis, on which are founded the liberties of Englishmen. It is not, however, to be considered as forming a new code of law, or even as an attempt to inculcate the great principles of legislation. Its framers meant not to disturb or improve the national jurisprudence: their only object was to correct the abuses, which had grown out of the feudal customs under the despotism of the first William and his successors:

Reliefs.

and the remedies which they devised for this purpose, were comprised in a charter, *granted* to use the language of our ancient statutes, by the king to his vassals and the freemen of the realm. 1. The first article regarded the church of England, to which John granted that it should possess all its liberties whole and inviolate; and to shew his readiness to maintain them, boasted of the charter of free election which he had signed previously to the commencement of the rupture between himself and the barons.⁶⁴ It would have been more satisfactory, if these liber-

Liberties
 of the
 church.

⁶³ Paris, 215—220. Rym. i. 67.

⁶⁴ C. i.

ties had been enumerated and described ; but the instrument proceeds immediately to the redress of the grievances, which pressed the most heavily on the tenants of the crown.

2. During the late reigns the king had been accustomed to exact arbitrary sums under the name of reliefs, to farm out the estates of his wards to the highest bidders,⁶⁵ to exercise the right of marrying the heir during his minority,⁶⁶ heiresses at any age above fourteen, and widows, if they held estates, to whomsoever, and whensoever he pleased.⁶⁷ In opposition to these abuses, it was now enacted, that the ancient reliefs should be restored, of one hundred pounds for the fee of an earl, one hundred marks for the fee of a baron, and one hundred shillings for the fee of a knight : that the guardian should receive only reasonable services from the lands of his

Reliefs.

Wardships.

⁶⁵ Thus Thomas de Colville gave 100 marks for the custody of the lands and children of Roger Torpel—Odo de Dammartin 500 marks for the wardship of the son of Hugh, the king's butler. Madox, c. x.

⁶⁶ This is denied by Blackstone, ii. 5, but sufficiently proved by Henshall in his dissertation, p. 32. See Madox, i. 465. 512. Henry III., speaking of his two wards, the earls of Warenne and Lincoln, says expressly, *qui quidem pueri sunt in custodia regis, et maritadium eorum ad regem pertinet.* Rymer, i. 441.

⁶⁷ Thus Alicia, countess of Warwick, had paid to John a fine of no less than 1000 pounds for permission to remain a widow as long as she chose. Madox, c. xiii. The countess of Gloucester, the lady whom he had repudiated for Isabella, he gave in marriage to Geoffry de Mandeville : and though it was a compulsory marriage, he exacted from the reluctant earl securities for the payment of ten thousand marks, as a remuneration for the favour. Chron. Dunst. p. 74.

CHAP.

I

Marriages.

ward during the minority; should uphold the houses and buildings; and should commit no waste of the chattels or slaves: that heirs and heiresses should not be married to their disparagement, nor without the previous knowledge of their relations: and that widows should be entitled to the undisturbed possession of their own inheritance, of their maritagium, or the lands given with them in marriage, and of their dower, or the third part of the estates of their deceased husband: and that moreover they should be permitted to remain single as long as they pleased, provided they gave security not to marry without the consent of their lord.⁶⁸

Aids and
scutages.

3. In former times aids and scutages had been levied but sparingly: of late they had become of annual recurrence; and their amount was regulated, not by ancient custom, but by the rapacity of the king, and the expected forbearance of his vassals. By the charter his right to exact an aid was limited to the three legal cases, of his personal captivity, of the knighthood of his eldest son, and of the marriage of his eldest daughter.⁶⁹

Convoca-
tion of
the great
council.

To levy an aid or scutage on any other occasion, the consent of the great council of the tenants of the crown was made necessary. The members composing this council were enumerated: namely, the archbishops, bishops, abbots, earls, and greater barons, who should be summoned

⁶⁸ Mag. Char. c. 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8.⁶⁹ Ibid. c. 12.

personally by writ, and all the other tenants in chief of the crown, who should be summoned generally by the sheriff. It was added, that the summons should be issued at least forty days beforehand ; that it should specify the time and the place of meeting, and the intended subject of discussion ; and that, whenever all these particulars had been duly observed, the members who were absent should be bound by the determination of those, who had been present.⁷⁰ The reader will observe that this was not a parliament in the present sense of the word. It consisted entirely of the king's tenants, and was to be convoked for the sole purpose of granting him a supply. Yet the reader will see, that by the influence of the crown it was expunged from the charter in the first year of the next reign, and was never afterwards readmitted ; though it seldom happened that any sovereign ventured to violate it openly.⁷¹

4. Our kings seldom remained for any length of time stationary in one place : and as long as the courts of law followed the royal person, much inconvenience was experienced both by suitors and witnesses, who, on account of the several hearings frequently given to the same cause, were successively dragged to different, and often very distant, parts of the kingdom. Hence it happened, that during the two last

Court of
common
pleas.

⁷⁰ C. 11.

⁷¹ Chart. Hen. III. an. 1^o, c. 42.

CHAP. reigns a bench of justices had been established
 I. at Westminster to decide causes between party
 and party: and this institution was now confirmed by the charter, which enacted that "common pleas should no longer follow the person of the king, but be held in some certain place." By this clause the king's court, and the court of exchequer, which still accompanied the sovereign, were confined to the cognizance of criminal matters, and of causes regarding the revenue: and the court which sat at Westminster, from hearing those causes, in which both the parties were subjects, obtained the name, which it still bears, of the court of common pleas.⁷²

5. For the better administration of justice, the king granted that no man should be made justice, constable, sheriff, or bailiff, unless he were sufficiently versed in the law: that no sheriff, constable, coroner, or bailiff, should hold pleas of the crown: that no bailiff should on his own assertion, and without the evidence of witnesses, put any man on his law: and that, as the itinerant justices made their circuits at very distant and uncertain periods, two justices should be sent into every county four times in the year, who, with the aid of four knights to be chosen in the county court, should hold assizes of *darrein presentment*, *mort d'ancestor*, and *novel*

disseisin.⁷³ It is not improbable that the establishment of this new court gave a shock to the ancient institution of shire-motes, and was the origin of the present custom of associating other persons in the commission of the justices of assize.

6. All these were useful provisions: those which followed were still more important. The iniquitous means by which our kings derived money from the proceedings in courts of law, have been noticed in the reign of Henry II. As a remedy, John was compelled to sign the following article, “ We will not sell, we will not “ refuse, we will not defer right or justice to “ any one.”⁷⁴ Treading in the footsteps of the

Justice
not to be
sold.

⁷³ Ibid. c. 45. 24. 38. 18, 19. Darrein presentment was a recognition to discover who presented the last parson to a church; mort d'ancestor, whether the last possessor was seised of land in demesne as of his own fee; and novel disseisin, whether the claimant had been unjustly disseised of his freehold.

⁷⁴ C. 41. Instances similar to those mentioned in the history of Henry II. are to be found under John. See Madox i. 448. 452. 515. 515. In the history of Croyland is a tedious but curious account of a suit respecting the right to a marsh, between the abbot of that monastery and the prior of Spalding. It lasted the whole reign of Richard, and great part of that of John. Money was required at every step. Forty marks were given to have a trial, to put it off, to suspend judgment, &c. At last the prior gave sixty marks, when the abbot offered one hundred, and judgment was given. From the writs issued on the occasion, it appears, that the judge could not proceed, till security had been given for the payment of the money. Ideo vobis mandamus, quod accepta securitate de illis 40 marcis, tunc coram vobis audiri.—So the justiciary writes to the sheriff: Scias quod prior de Spalding fecit nos securos per Simonem de Lima de 40 marcis: ideo summone, &c. Hist. Croyl. 455—477.

CHAP.

I.

Protection
of persons
and pro-
perty.

most despotic of his predecessors, he had been accustomed to arrest his vassals on the mere suspicion of their hostile intentions, to compel them to give hostages for their fidelity, to imprison them, to banish them, to ravage their lands, and to demolish their castles. He now consented that "no freeman should be arrested, "or imprisoned, or disseised of his land, or outlawed, or destroyed in any manner, nor should the king go upon him, nor send upon him, "but by the lawful judgment of his peers, or "by the law of the land."⁷⁵ By this clause the property and liberty of the subject were protected against the tyranny and resentment of the monarch: and in the same spirit of legislation the charter proceeds to enact, that earls

⁷⁵ C. 40. If the reader recollect that Henry II., for no other cause than to mortify archbishop Becket, banished all his friends and relatives to the number of some hundreds; and that John very lately, had arrested all the relatives of Langton and the bishops his associates, had despoiled them of their goods, and thrown them into prison, though they had not been guilty of any offence (Paris, 190); he will see the necessity of this clause to check such lawless and despotic proceedings.—The words "We will not destroy him, nor "will we go upon him, nor will we send upon him," have been very differently expounded by different legal authorities. Their real meaning may be learned from John himself, who the next year promised by his letters patent . . . *nec super eos per vim vel per arma ibimus, nisi per legem regni nostri, vel per iudicium parium suorum in curia nostra.* Pat. 16. Johan. apud Brad. ii. App. N^o. 124. He had hitherto been in the habit of *going* with an armed force, or *sending* an armed force on the lands, and against the castles, of all whom he knew or suspected to be his secret enemies, without observing any form of law.

and barons should be amerced by their peers only, and according to the nature of their offence: that freemen should not be amerced heavily for a small fault, nor above measure for a great transgression, saving always to the freeholder his freehold, to the merchant his merchandise, and to the husbandman his implements of husbandry; and that such amerciaments should be imposed by the oath of the good men of the neighbourhood.⁷⁶

CHAP.
I.
Amerciaments.

7. To restrain the injustice of the royal purveyors, it was enacted, that no constable or bailiff should take the corn or goods of any person without making immediate payment, unless he obtained a respite from the free will of the owner; nor employ the horses or carts of any freeman to perform carriages without the consent of the same freeman; nor cut down another person's wood for the royal castles or other uses, without the permission of him to whom the wood belonged.⁷⁷

Purveyance.

8. The barons, having secured their own rights, attended to those of the cities and burghs, which had progressively risen in importance, and given their aid in the present quarrel. The charter confirmed to the capital and all other cities, burghs, towns, and sea-ports, the enjoyment of their ancient liberties and free customs by land and water; ordered the same weights

Liberties of cities and burghs.

⁷⁶ C. 20, 21.

⁷⁷ C. 28, 30, 31.

CHAP.

I.

Foreign
mer-
chants.

and measures to be employed in all parts of the realm; and granted to foreign merchants the liberty to come into England, to reside in it, to travel through it, and to depart from it without exaction, according to right and ancient custom. The king, however, retained the power to arrest them in time of war, and to keep them in custody, as a measure of security, till it should be known in what manner the English merchants had been treated in the enemy's country.⁷⁸

Liberty to
quit the
realm.

9. It was moreover provided, that every free-man should have full liberty to quit the kingdom and return to it, saving his allegiance, and unless it were in time of war. From this liberty were excepted prisoners, outlaws, and merchants from hostile estates.⁷⁹

Griev-
ances of
the forest
laws.

10. The royal forests were the peculiar property of the crown. They were governed by their own laws, emanating from the sole will of the prince, and thus formed so many separate local governments in the very heart of the kingdom. That part of their code, which had for its object the preservation of the deer, was written in characters of blood. To kill "the king's venison," as it was called, subjected the offender to the loss of his life or members. Other laws, ostensibly intended for the preservation of the forests, but in reality for the profit of the king and his officers, created a

⁷⁸ C. 13, 35, 41.

⁷⁹ C. 42.

multitude of offences, most oppressive and harassing to all, who lived on the borders, or possessed property within the precincts of these enclosures. The charter professed to remedy some of the grievances, which have been mentioned. It threw open all forests, that had been made since the commencement of the king's reign: and appointed twelve knights to be chosen in the court of each county; empowered them to inquire upon oath into all evil customs of forests and warrens, foresters and warreners; and authorized them to abolish such customs within forty days, provided notice were previously given to the king or his justiciary.⁸⁰

11. Had the charter stopped here, the relief which it was meant to afford, would, in a great measure, have been confined to the immediate tenants of the crown. The great body of freemen was composed of the sub-vassals of these tenants, who had suffered from the tyranny of their lords the same oppressions, which the lords had suffered from the tyranny of the sovereign. As they had shared in the enterprise, they might justly expect to share in its advantages: and in their favour a clause was inserted, providing, "that every liberty and custom, which the king had granted to his tenants as far as concerned him, should be observed

Liberties
of sub-
vassals.

⁸⁰ C. 47, 48.

CHAP. "by the clergy and laity towards their tenants,
 I. "as far as concerned them." The slaves, still
 one of the most numerous classes in the kingdom, were not mentioned. They, of course, could have no claim to participate in the privileges of freemen.⁸¹

Temporary provisions.

12. To these articles others were added of a temporary nature. The king promised to restore the hostages and charters which he had obtained from the barons; to make full restitution to every man, English or Welsh, who could prove that he had been dispossessed of his lands, castles, liberties, or rights, without the legal judgment of his peers: to remit all fines and amerciaments made unjustly and against law: to give back to Llewellyn, prince of Wales, his son and hostages: and to act towards Alexander, king of Scots, with respect to the restoration of his sisters and hostages, and his liberties and rights, in the same manner as he should act towards his other barons of England, unless it ought to be otherwise, according to the charters which he had received from William, the father and predecessor of Alexander: and in these points to be guided by the decision of the peers of the Scottish prince in the king's court.⁸²

Such were the chief provisions of the great

⁸¹ C. 60. They had also power to inquire into the conduct of the sheriffs, and other inferior officers of the crown.

⁸² C. 49. 52. 55. 58, 59.

CHAP.
I.

charter, which for centuries was considered as the palladium of our national freedom. Most of them expired with that system for which they were calculated. But at the time they were highly useful. They checked the most galling abuses of feudal superiority; they gave a new tone to English legislation; they justified resistance to the encroachments of despotism; and in subsequent struggles with the crown, pointed to determinate objects the efforts of the nation. By our kings, who considered the charter as wrung from them by the strong grasp of necessity, they were perpetually evaded: by the people, who deemed them the expression of their just rights, they were as often and imperiously reclaimed. It required no less than thirty-five successive ratifications to give them in effect the full force of law,⁸³ a sufficient proof how much they were abhorred by the sovereign, and how highly they were prized by the nation.

During this transaction John had shewn himself a perfect master in the art of dissimulation. He assumed an air of cheerfulness: he spoke with courtesy and kindness to the barons: he promised the most prompt and faithful execution of all his engagements. Writs were immediately issued to the sheriffs, to assemble

John resolves to set aside the charter.

June 19.

⁸³ The charter was ratified four times by Henry III., twice by Edward I., fifteen times by Edward III., seven times by Richard II., six times by Henry IV., and once by Henry V.

CHAP.

I.

the courts of the counties, to read publicly the contents of the charter, to proceed to the election of the twelve knights to inquire into abuses, and to receive from all freemen the oath of obedience to the twenty-five barons appointed conservators of the public liberties.⁸⁴ But as soon as the assembly was dissolved, he threw off the mask. In a paroxysm of rage he cursed the day of his birth, gnashed his teeth, rolled his eyes, gnawed sticks and straws, and acted all the freaks of a madman. But from this frenzy he was awakened by the officiousness of his advisers, who urged him not to waste his time in useless exhibitions of passion, but to assist in devising the most speedy means of revenge. The result of their counsels was the immediate departure of two deputations to the continent. The one was charged to traverse Flanders, Picardy, Poitou, and Guienne, and to hire at any price adventurers to fight under the royal standard: the other hastened to Rome to implore in the king's defence the powerful interposition of Innocent, and to represent every concession extorted from the vassal as an insult offered to the authority of his lord, the pontiff.⁸⁵

Suspensions
of the ba-
rons.

The barons had left Runnymede in triumph; and, to celebrate the fall of the despot, had

⁸⁴ Apud Brady, ii. App. N^o. 118. p. 149.

⁸⁵ Illatæ vobis in persona nostra injuriæ. Rym. i. 202.

appointed a tournament to be fought at Stamford on the second of July. But their joy was soon clouded with suspicion. John had eluded the restoration of their lands by promising to do them justice in his court on a certain day: now it was ascertained that he had ordered all his castles to be provisioned and fortified: and information was received of a plot to surprise the capital during their absence at Stamford. To defeat the latter, the time appointed for the tournament was postponed, and the place was removed nearer to London.⁸⁶ To prove the king's sincerity, a deputation waited on him at Winchester. He laughed at their suspicions, swore that they were unfounded, and offered to hasten the execution of the charter in any manner which should be suggested by the archbishop. In consequence, writs were issued to the twelve commissioners already elected in each county, charging them to enter into possession of the lands, tenements, and chattels of all persons, who had hitherto refused to take the oath to the twenty-five conservators; at the expiration of a fortnight, unless they had then obeyed the former order, to sell their chattels for the benefit of the fund for the expedition to the holy land; and afterwards to retain possession of the lands and tenements as long as the owners should per-

June 27.

⁸⁶ Apud Paris, 222.

CHAP.

I.

sist in their obstinacy.⁸⁷ John in his turn required that, since they had promised to give him any security which he might demand, excepting their castles and hostages, they should now severally subscribe charters, declaring that they were bound by oath and homage to be true to him against all manner of men, and to defend his rights and the rights of his heirs to the crown. They refused: and the archbishop, with several prelates, gave a solemn attestation of their refusal.⁸⁸

Another interview took place at Oxford, and the parties separated still more dissatisfied with each other.⁸⁹ The king, who sought to gain time, appointed a third conference to be held in the last week of August, which proved as fruitless as the preceding.⁹⁰ He did not attend personally, as he had repaired to Dover, to receive the foreign auxiliaries who had accepted his offers. They repeatedly arrived in great numbers: either needy adventurers, who in hopes of

Sep. 1.

⁸⁷ Apud Brady, ii. App. N^o. 119. p. 150.

⁸⁸ Ibid. N^o. 134. p. 162.

⁸⁹ Matt. West. 1273.

⁹⁰ Mailros, 183. I am aware that this account differs from that of Paris, who tells us that John spent the day after the signature of the charter at Windsor, senked away the next morning to the isle of Wight, took up the profession of a pirate, and passed three months in the island, or at sea in the company of mariners. Paris, 222. Yet his account cannot possibly be true. From public instruments still extant, and published by Brady and Rymer, it is certain that John was at Runnymede on the 19th of June, at Winchester on the 27th, at Oxford on the 21st of July, and that he resided at Dover during the whole of the month of September.

new settlements had brought with them their wives and families ; or soldiers by profession, who had been accustomed to sell their blood to the highest bidder. The barons were alarmed : and though they had long hesitated to recommence hostilities, ordered William D'Albiny to take forcible possession of the castle of Rochester, which had been put by the king into the hands of Langton as a pledge of his sincerity. It was without provisions or engines of war : and before D'Albiny could procure a sufficient supply of either, it was surrounded by John with his mercenaries. Though the barons marched out of London, they did not venture to face the royal army ; and the castle was repeatedly assailed, and as obstinately defended, during the space of eight weeks. When the sappers had thrown down part of the outer wall, the garrison withdrew into the keep. By means of a mine one of the angles was shattered : John urged his men to force their way through the breach : but every assault was repulsed with loss ; and the mind of the king was embittered by a succession of disappointments. Famine, at last, subdued the obstinacy of the besieged ; and when D'Albiny and his companions had consumed their last meal, suddenly opening the gate, they threw themselves on the royal mercy. John ordered them all to be hanged ; but Sauvery de Mauleon opposed the cruel mandate, on the ground that his own officers would be exposed

October.

Nov. 30.

CHAP.

I.

to the danger of retaliation. With difficulty an order was extorted from the tyrant to confine the knights in different castles : their followers were immediately executed, with the exception of the cross-bowmen, who probably entered into his service.⁹¹

Charter
annulled
by Inno-
cent.

Aug. 24.

While the king was employed in the siege of Rochester, he received the pleasing intelligence, that according to his request the charter had been annulled by the pontiff. Innocent, enumerating the grounds of his judgment, insists strongly on the violence employed by the barons. If they really felt themselves aggrieved, they ought, he observes, to have accepted the offer of redress by due course of law. They had preferred, however, to break the oath of fealty, which they had taken ; and had appointed themselves judges to sit upon their lord. They knew moreover that John had enrolled himself among the crusaders ; and yet they had not scrupled to violate the privileges which all christian nations had granted to the champions of the cross. Lastly, England was become the fief of the holy see ; and they could not be ignorant that if the king had the will, he had not at least the power, to give away the rights of the crown without the consent of his feudal superior. He was therefore bound to annul the concessions which had been extorted from John, as having been ob-

⁹¹ Paris, 225—227.

tained in contempt of the holy see, to the degradation of royalty, to the disgrace of the nation, and to the impediment of the crusade. At the same time he wrote to the barons, restating these reasons, exhorting them to submit, requesting them to lay their claims before him in the council to be held at Rome ; and promising that he would induce the king to consent to whatever might be deemed just or reasonable, to take care that all grievances should be abolished, that the crown should be content with its just rights, and the clergy and people should enjoy their ancient liberties.⁹² Finding that his exhortations and his promises were equally fruitless, he ordered Langton to excommunicate the disobedient : but that prelate refused : in punishment he was suspended from the exercise of the archiepiscopal functions ; nor could he, though he attended the council at Rome, mollify the pontiff, or recover the exercise of his authority. Another sentence of excommunication was then fulminated, in which the chiefs of the confederates were mentioned by name, and the city of London was laid under an interdict. Both censures were equally despised. They had been obtained, so the partisans of the barons argued, on false suggestions, and for objects not within the jurisdiction of the pontiff. He had no right to interfere in temporal concerns : the

Dec. 16.

⁹² Rym. i. 203. 205. Par. 223—225.

CHAP.

I.

King ravages the country.

control of ecclesiastical matters only had been intrusted by Christ to Peter, and Peter's successors.⁹³

John had now assumed a decided superiority, and resolved to wreak the whole weight of his vengeance on the heads of his enemies. At St. Alban's he divided his army into two parts. The command of the one was given to his brother the earl of Salisbury, with the task of spreading devastation over the counties of Essex, Hertford, Middlesex, Cambridge, Ely, and Huntingdon. He placed himself at the head of the other, and directed his march towards the north.

Alexander, the young king of Scotland, had not been less anxious than the English barons, to escape from the yoke of the tyrant; but he required and obtained from them the cession of Northumberland, Cumberland, and Westmoreland, as the price of his co-operation. In October he had crossed the borders, invested the castle of Norham, and received at Felton the homage and fealty of the inhabitants of Northumberland.⁹⁴ As John advanced, two powerful barons, Gilbert Fitz-Reinforth, and John, constable of Chester, were admitted to the royal favour: but they first gave him hostages from

⁹³ Rym. i. 208. 211, 212. Par. 227, 228. 232. Ex hoc maxime quod non pertinet ad papam ordinatio rerum laicarum: cum Petro, apostolo et ejus successoribus non nisi ecclesiasticarum dispositio rerum, a domino sit collata. p. 233.

⁹⁴ Maillos, 139. Anderson's Independence of Scot. App. N^o. 26.

their own families and the families of their principal retainers; and subscribed charters by which they bound themselves to serve him, during life; promised neither to keep the oaths which they had taken to his enemies, nor to require the execution of the charter; and submitted to the penalty of perpetual disherison, if they should ever violate these engagements.⁹⁵

But the other barons, the moment the king entered Yorkshire, setting fire to their stacks and houses, fled into Scotland, and at Melrose did homage to Alexander, who at the approach of the royal army had raised the siege of Norham. Never, we are told, since the exterminating expedition of the first William, had these provinces been exposed to such horrors, as they now experienced from the vengeance of the king of England. He himself gave the example; and with his own hands set fire in the morning to the house in which he had rested the last night. The castles, towns, and villages, were given to the flames. The monk of Melrose confines his description to the neighbourhood of his own monastery, where, within the space of eight days, Morpeth, Mitford, Alnwick, Wark, and Roxburgh were entirely consumed. John declared that he would unkennel the young fox, alluding to the ruddy complexion of Alexander; and followed him to Edinburgh, burning in his

1216.
Jan. 11.

Jan. 7—
15.

Jan. 13.

⁹⁵ Rym. i. 206.

CHAP.

I.

return Haddington, Dunbar, and Berwick. But it was not with the towns only that he warred: the miserable inhabitants were abandoned to the cruelty of his rapacious followers, without respect of age or sex, rank or profession. The tortures which they suffered, are too shocking to be related. Whoever possessed any thing, was compelled to deliver all for his ransom. Of those who had nothing, many perished under the hands of their torturers, some by fallacious promises purchased a short respite to be succeeded by more exquisite torments. Nor were the plunderers in the south, if we may believe the monk of St. Alban's, behind their fellows in cruelty and rapacity. Wherever the royal forces could penetrate, the inhabitants fled to the forests and mountains: the labours of agriculture were suspended: and the only markets were held in the churchyards which, as they possessed the right of sanctuary, were generally, but not always, respected by the marauders.⁹⁶

Barons
offer the
crown to
Louis.

From the walls of the capital the barons beheld the devastation of their country, but dared not hazard an attempt against the hordes of adventurers, who followed the royal standard. In the north two castles alone remained in their hands: every where their lands had been ravaged, and then, with a liberality which cost nothing to the donor, had been granted in fee

⁹⁶ Compare Mailros, 189, 190, with Paris, 230—232.

to the chiefs of the foreigners. Many days were spent in anxious debate, and unmanly lamentation. They consulted and hesitated: resolved and changed their resolves: till, as a last resource, it was unanimously determined to offer the crown to Louis, the eldest son of the king of France. He was allied to the family of Plantagenet by his marriage with the niece of John: and it was presumed that the mercenaries would refuse to bear arms against the son and heir of their natural sovereign. To the ambition of Louis no offer could have been more acceptable: but, unwilling to trust himself to the doubtful faith of the barons, he demanded and received twenty-four hostages, sons of the noblest families in England. A fleet, carrying a numerous band of French knights, soon ascended the Thames; and a letter from Louis assured the confederates, that he would visit them at Easter with a powerful army. It chanced that the legate Gualo was passing through France on his way to the British isles. He deemed it his duty to prevent, if possible, an expedition so hostile to the views of the pontiff; and finding that his solicitations were disregarded, forbade, under the penalty of excommunication, either father or son to invade a kingdom, which was a fief of the holy see. Philip affected to hesitate: but Louis hastily turning towards him, said; "I am your liege man, Sir, for the fees which you have given me:

Apr. 26.

CHAP. " but with the kingdom of England you can
 { I. " have no concern. And I put it to the judg-
 " ment of my peers, whether you ought to pre-
 " vent me from obtaining a crown, to which in
 " right of my wife I can shew a lawful title." Without waiting for an answer, he departed, and ordered his retainers to rendezvous at Calais.⁹⁷

His pre-
 tended
 claim.

The reader has probably been startled at the mention of this unexpected right. He will soon learn the arguments by which it was supported, arguments so weak, that they were probably advanced for the sole purpose of gaining time. The agents of Louis arrived at Rome, were introduced to the pontiff, and assured him that their master was an obedient son of the church: that he had not undertaken the expedition to carry assistance to the excommunicated barons, but solely to assert the title of his wife Blanche to the crown of England. This title they asserted to rest on the ground that John was not in reality king: for 1^o he had been attainted of treason in the court of his brother Richard, and therefore was incapable by law of ascending the throne; and 2^o he had been found guilty of felony and murder by his peers in the court of his lord the king of France, and had of consequence forfeited the crown, even in the supposition of his having previously possessed a just title to it. Innocent smiled at these arguments,

⁹⁷ Paris, 236. West. 276.

and requested to know, how Blanche came to be the next heir? Where were the children of John, or his nephew Otho, or the mother, the brother, and the elder sister of Blanche? To this question it was replied that the children of John were born after his condemnation, and could claim no right, with which their father was not invested at the time of their birth: that neither could the issue of Geoffry duke of Bretagne, or of Matilda dutchess of Saxony, possess any title, because that prince and princess were both dead, when sentence was passed on their brother. But the queen of Castile was then living, and therefore became the true heir: and Blanche, though she was not the eldest of her children, had a right, as long as the nearer heirs were silent, to put in her claim. Louis certainly meant to conquer the English crown: but if any other person should come forward, and shew a better right, he was willing that justice should be done. Such reasoning might amuse, it could not satisfy the mind of the pontiff. He waited however till he had received dispatches from the legate, and then solemnly excommunicated Louis and his abettors. Soon afterwards he commanded the archbishop of Sens to fulminate a similar sentence against Philip: but the French bishops in a synod at Melun, resolved to disregard the papal mandate, on the ground that the pope had not been truly informed. That Innocent would have lanced his anathemas

CHAP. against their disobedience, cannot be doubted :
 I. but in a few weeks that active and fearless pon-
 tiff expired : his death suspended all ecclesiasti-
 cal proceedings at Rome ; and John saw himself
 July 16. deprived of his most powerful friend at a mo-
 ment, when he stood in the greatest need of his
 protection.

He lands
 in Eng-
 land.

At the appointed time Louis departed from
 Calais with a fleet of six hundred and eighty
 sail. The weather was stormy, and dispersed
 the ships : many were taken by the mariners of
 the cinque ports : and John with a numerous
 army lay in the vicinity of Dover. But his heart
 failed him at the approach of the enemy : he
 feared that his mercenaries might desert him ;
 decamped on a sudden ; and ravaging the coun-
 try as he passed, retired through Winchester to
 Bristol, where he was joined by the legate. The
 French prince, having waited three days for the
 stragglers, landed at Sandwich, besieged and
 reduced the castle of Rochester, and hastened
 his march to the capital. He was received in
 procession by the barons and citizens, and con-
 ducted to St. Paul's, where, after he had made
 his prayer, he received the homage of his new
 subjects, and took a solemn oath to govern
 them by good laws, to protect them against
 their enemies, and to reinstate them in their
 former rights and possessions.⁹⁸ By his affa-

May 21.

May 30.

June 2.

⁹⁸ Paris, 237. Chron. Dunstap. 75.

CHAP.

I.

June 14.

July 25.

bility Louis charmed the natives: he won their confidence by appointing Simon Langton, the brother of the primate, to the office of chancellor. The campaign was opened with the fairest promise of future success. All the counties in the neighbourhood of the capital submitted: the men of Lincolnshire and Yorkshire, with the king of Scots, declared in his favour: the foreigners, who had hitherto swelled the army of John, began, with the exception of the natives of Gascony, either to join his standard, or to return to their homes: and at his summons several of the royal barons, perhaps through fear of his power, perhaps with the view of spreading disaffection among his adherents,⁹⁹ hastened to do him homage and to swear fealty. Still the spirits of John were upheld by the presence of Gualo, who fought most manfully with his spiritual weapons, and by the knowledge, that, if his rival had gained possession of the open country, yet every fortress of importance was garrisoned by his own troops. To reduce these fortresses was the next object of the confederates. Louis besieged the castle of Dover; the barons, under the earl of Nevers, that of Windsor. The prince had received from his father a military engine of the most formidable descrip-

⁹⁹ Mailros, 191. Among them was his brother William, earl of Salisbury. But his desertion was the effect of resentment: quia ei innotuit dictum Joannem regem cum ipsius uxore rupto fœdere naturali commississe incestum. Gul. Armor, 90.

CHAP. 1. tion, called the mal-voisin, or bad neighbour, with which he expected to make a breach in the walls. But the garrison kept him at too great a distance, compelled him to turn the siege into a blockade, and employed him in this useless project during the space of four months.

Aug. 3. The tediousness of the siege was partially relieved by the arrival of a royal vassal, Alexander, king of Scots, who, in consequence of a summons to that purpose, after the reduction of Carlisle, marched through the heart of the kingdom within sight of John, visited Louis at Dover, obtained a confirmation of the cession made to him by the barons, did homage in London, and returned to his own country without molestation.¹⁰⁰

King is
joined by
some of
the barons.
Sep. 13.

While his enemies lay before the two castles, the king had improved the opportunity to pillage their estates, and intercept their supplies. He was at Wallingford, when the barons, by the persuasion of the earl of Nevers, whom they afterwards charged with perfidy, undertook to surprise him. They raised the siege, and marched rapidly to Cambridge: but the king, anticipating their object, had already passed through that city and retired as far as Stamford. Foiled in this attempt, they returned to join Louis at Dover, while John reduced Lincoln, and again distributed among his followers the lands

Sep. 22.

¹⁰⁰ Mailros, 191. Paris, 241. Dunstap. 76. Anderson's Independence of Scot. App. N^o 26.

belonging to the confederates. The royal cause began to assume a more promising aspect.— The two last months had been wasted in idleness by the French prince: the men of the cinque ports perpetually intercepted his supplies from France: associations against him had been formed in Hampshire and Sussex; and John, to invigorate the efforts of his friends, had not been sparing of promises to enlarge the privileges of those who were free, and to bestow liberty and rights on those who were not.¹⁰¹ Louis, by grants to his own countrymen, particularly of the earldom of Winchester to the count de Nevers, and of that of Lincoln to Gilbert de Gand, had alarmed the English barons:¹⁰² and it was whispered that the viscount de Melun had confessed on his death-bed, that he had sworn with the prince and fifteen others to treat the natives as men, whose perfidy to their late, was an earnest of future perfidy to their new sovereign.¹⁰³ They became jealous of their allies: and several barons and knights actually joined, forty others on the promise of pardon offered to join, the royal standard.¹⁰⁴ The king returned from Lincoln through Grimsby and Spalding to Lynn, a town strongly attached to his interests, and the gene-

Oct. 2.

Oct. 9.

¹⁰¹ Rym. i. 214. ¹⁰² Paris, 210. Dunst. 76. ¹⁰³ Paris, 241.

¹⁰⁴ Paris, 242. Dunst. 78. In detailing the motions of the king I have deserted Paris, who is evidently mistaken, and adopted the route and dates, which Brady has extracted from the rolls. Brady, ii. 515.

- CHAP. I.
 Oct. 12. ral depot for his supplies and treasures. Thence he marched to Wisbeach, and resolved to proceed athwart the Wash from the Cross Keys to the Fossdike. The army had reached the land: but on turning back John beheld a long train of waggons and sumpter-horses, which carried his jewels, insignia, and money, swallowed up in a whirlpool, caused by the afflux of the tide and the current of the Welland. With a heavy heart he proceeded to the Cistercian convent of Swineshead, where fatigue, or anxiety, or poison, or a surfeit (for all these causes are mentioned)¹⁰⁵ threw him into a dangerous fever. He set out, however, in the morning: but was obliged to exchange his horse for a litter, and was conveyed with difficulty to the castle of Sleaford. There he passed the night, and dictated a letter to the new pope Honorius III. recommending in the most earnest terms the interests of his children to the protection of that pontiff.¹⁰⁶ The next day conducted him to the castle of Newark; where, sensible of his approaching fate, he sent for a confessor, appointed his eldest son Henry to succeed him, and expressed a wish that his body might be buried at Worcester, near the shrine of St. Wulstan. He expired three days later, in the forty-ninth year of his age, and the seventeenth of his reign.¹⁰⁷
- Oct. 14. Loses his treasures.
- Oct. 15.
- Dies. Oct. 19.

¹⁰⁵ Paris, 242. West. 276. Wikes, 38. Waverl. 182. Hem. 560.

¹⁰⁶ Apud Raynald, i. 231.

¹⁰⁷ Paris, 242. West. 276.

When Giraldus delineated the characters of the four sons of Henry, John had already debased his faculties by excess and voluptuousness. The courtly eye of the preceptor could indeed discover the germ of future excellence in his pupil :¹⁰⁸ but history has recorded only his vices : his virtues, if such a monster could possess virtues, were unseen or forgotten. He stands before us polluted with meanness, cruelty, perjury, and murder ; uniting with an ambition, which rushed through every crime to the attainment of its object, a pusillanimity which often, at the sole appearance of opposition, sank into despondency. Arrogant in prosperity, abject in adversity, he neither conciliated affection in the one, nor excited esteem in the other. His dissimulation was so well known, that it seldom deceived : his suspicion served only to multiply his enemies : and the knowledge of his vindictive temper, contributed to keep open the breach between him and those, who had incurred his displeasure. Seldom perhaps was there a prince with a heart more callous to the suggestions of pity. Of his captives many never returned from their dungeons. If they survived their tortures, they were left to perish by famine. He could even affect to be witty at the expense of his victims. When Geoffry, archdeacon of Norwich, a faithful servant had retired from his seat at the exchequer

CHAP.

I.

His character.

¹⁰⁸ Girald. 753.

CHAP.

I.

on account of the interdict, the king ordered him to be arrested, and sent him a cope of lead to keep him warm in his prison. The cope was a large mantle, covering the body from the shoulders to the feet, and worn by clergymen during the service. Wrapt in this ponderous habit, with his head only at liberty, the unhappy man remained without food or assistance till he expired.¹⁰⁹ On another occasion he demanded a present of ten thousand marks from an opulent Jew at Bristol, and ordered one of his teeth to be drawn every morning till he should pay the money. The Jew was obstinate. The executioners began with his doubleteeth. He suffered the loss of seven : but on the eighth day solicited a respite, and gave security for the payment.¹¹⁰

John was not less reprehensible as a husband, than he was as a monarch. While Louis took from him his provinces on the continent, he had consoled himself for the loss in the company of his beautiful bride: but he soon abandoned her to revert to his former habits. The licentiousness of his amours is reckoned by every ancient writer among the principal causes of the alienation of his barons, many of whom had to lament and revenge the disgrace of a wife, or daughter, or sister. Isabella, to punish the infidelity, imitated the conduct, of her husband. But John was not to be insulted with impunity. He hanged her

¹⁰⁹ Paris, 192. Chron. Dumst. 57.

¹¹⁰ Ibid.

gallants over her bed.¹¹¹ She bore him three sons, Henry, Richard, and Edmund ; and three daughters, Jane, Eleanor, and Isabella. His illegitimate children were numerous. Nine sons and one daughter are mentioned by historians.

CHAP.

I.

¹¹¹ See Paris, 205. West. 276. Girald, 312. Heming, 557, 558.

CHAP. II.

HENRY III.

CONTEMPORARY PRINCES.

<i>Emperors of Ger.</i>	<i>Kings of Scotland.</i>	<i>Kings of France.</i>	<i>Kings of Spain.</i>	<i>Popes.</i>
Otho IV. . . . 1218.	Alexander II. 1249.	Philip Augustus. 1223.	Henry I. . . . 1217.	Honorius III. 1227.
Frederic II. . 1250.	Alexander III.	Louis VIII. 1226.	Frederic III. 1252.	Gregory IX. . . 1241.
Interregnum of 22 years. . . 1272.		Louis IX. . . 1270.	Alphonso X.	Celestin IV. . . 1241.
		Philip III.		Innocent IV. . 1254.
				Alexander IV. 1261.
				Urban IV. . . . 1264.
				Clement IV. . . 1268.
				Gregory X.

CORONATION OF HENRY—DEPARTURE OF LOUIS — RIVALSHIP OF THE MINISTERS—FALL OF HUBERT DE BURGH — DISPUTES WITH SCOTLAND—WITH WALES — WITH FRANCE — PAPAL CLAIMS—TALLAGES—PROVISIONS—ACCEPTANCE OF THE CROWN OF SICILY—CONTROVERSY BETWEEN THE KING AND BARONS—PROVISIONS OF OXFORD—BATTLE OF LEWES — VICTORY OF EVESHAM—DEATH OF THE KING—COMMONS IN PARLIAMENT—LAWS AND POLICE—ENGLISH BISHOPS.

CHAP.
II.

Corona-
tion of
Henry.

HENRY of Winchester had just completed his tenth year, when he found himself by the sudden death of his father, in possession of the title, but with little of the power, of a king. In the capital and the opulent provinces of the south Louis reigned almost without an opponent: in the

other counties his partisans were the more active, and his cause the more popular : and on the west and north the princes of Wales and the king of Scotland had acknowledged his authority, and become his vassals. Still the son of John could depend on the swords of the barons and foreigners, who had remained faithful to his father, on the powerful protection of the holy see, on the wavering disposition of the natives who adhered to his rival, and on the pity which would naturally be excited by his youth and innocence.

On the tenth day after the decease of the late monarch he was led to the cathedral of Gloucester ; and having taken the oath usually administered to the English kings, and sworn fealty to pope Honorius, was crowned by the legate Gualo, and the bishops of Winchester, Exeter, and Bath : who placed on his temples a plain circle of gold in lieu of the crown, which had been lost with the rest of the royal treasures. The next day a proclamation was issued, in which the new king, lamenting the dissension between his father and the barons, a dissension which he should for ever dismiss from his memory, promised to all his subjects a full amnesty for the past, and their lawful liberties for the future ; required the tenants of the crown to do homage and swear fealty to himself as their legitimate sovereign ; and forbade any person to appear in public during the next month without a white fillet round the head in honour of his coronation.

Oct. 23.

CHAP. The care of his person was intrusted to the earl
 II. of Pembroke, earl marshal, with the title of
 guardian of the kingdom.¹

Confirmation of the
 great charter.

Nov. 12.

A great council had been summoned to meet in a fortnight at Bristol, and was attended by all the bishops and abbots, by several earls and barons, and by many knights, who took the oath of allegiance, and performed the feudal ceremony of homage. But the great object of the meeting was to reconcile the claims of the crown with those of the subject, to satisfy the demands of the adverse barons, without trenching too deeply on the royal prerogative. For this purpose the great charter was revised, and cut down from sixty-one chapters to forty-two. 1^o Every clause of a temporary nature, or which personally regarded the late king and his opponents, was struck out. 2^o Several clauses were omitted which appeared to bear hard on the ancient claims of the crown: particularly those which related to the right of levying aids and scutages, and of convoking the great council; which abolished the abuses of forests and foresters, warrens and warreners, sheriffs, bailiffs, and other royal officers; which required notice to be given to the relations before the marriage of the heir; which granted the liberty of egress out of, and ingress into, the kingdom; and which allowed the goods of persons dying intestate to be divided

¹ Rym. i. 215. Paris, 243. Wikes, 38.

among their relations after the payment of their just debts. But it was distinctly stated that these provisions had not been repealed. Their operation was only suspended, till they could be submitted to the consideration of a full assembly of the barons of both parties.² 3^o Some improvements were introduced. The lord was forbidden to assume the custody of the person and lands of the heir, till he had received the homage of his ward: because, before that homage he was not bound to defend the interests of his vassal. All the provisions respecting wardships were extended to the custody of vacant benefices, with this exception, that such custody should not be sold. The rate at which carriages might be taken for the king's use was fixed:³ and some regulations were added respecting the payment of his debts. The ratification of the charter in this form was received with gratitude by the royalists: nor was it violently condemned by their opponents, when they learned that the clauses, which had been omitted, were still reserved for future discussion.⁴

² Quia quædam capitula in priore charta continebantur, quæ gravia et dubitabilia videbantur, scilicet de scutagiis. . . . placuit supradictis prælatis et magnatibus ea esse in respectu, quosque plenius consilium habuerimus. Mag. Char. i. Hen. III. c. 61.

³ Hence it appears, that the hire of a cart with two horses was 10*d.*—with three horses 14*d.* per day. Mag. Chart. c. 23.

⁴ Compare the charter of the 17th of John with that of the 1st of Henry. See also Rym. i. 215.

CHAP.

II.

Difficul-
ties of
Louis.

If Louis had rejoiced at the death of John, he quickly found that the son would prove a more formidable competitor than the father. The youth and innocence of Henry excited universal compassion. John indeed, it was said, had been a tyrant: but what crime had the prince committed, that he should forfeit the crown, to which he was born? His rival was a Frenchman, who daily betrayed an unjust partiality in favour of his countrymen. Even now, while his success depended on the efforts of his English adherents, many a native saw with indignation the honours which he claimed as a right, bestowed as a reward by this foreign prince on his foreign retainers. To aid such favourable impressions, and to foment the jealousy and discontent of their adversaries, became the policy of Gualo and Pembroke. To all who returned to their allegiance, their former liberties were confirmed: tales of the arrogance of the French, and of their contempt for the natives, were industriously circulated: the report of a conspiracy against the chief of the English nobility was revived and believed: and the minds of men were awed and confounded by the weekly repetition of the excommunication fulminated against Louis and his adherents. Neither did the pontiff forget the interests of his young vassal. By his letters he stimulated the zeal of the legate, and sought to awaken sentiments of loyalty in the barons. To justify their rebellion, he

CHAP.

II.

observed, they had formerly alleged the tyranny of John. But that plea must now be abandoned. The tyranny of John had perished with the tyrant; and if they persisted to oppose the succession of his son, they would prove that their former assertions were but pretences, and that they had been actuated by motives which they were ashamed to avow.⁵ By these means a revolution was gradually wrought in the public mind to the advantage of Henry; and the hopes of the royalists were cheered by the return of the earl of Salisbury and of several knights, who came to swear fealty to their native sovereign. Even William D'Albiny, as soon as he had recovered his liberty by the payment of six thousand marks, unfurled the royal standard.⁶

Louis had at last raised the siege of Dover, and to compensate himself for the loss of his time at the foot of that fortress, had taken the two castles of Hertford and Berkhamstead. Pembroke surrendered to him two others as the price of a truce till the festival of Easter, a suspension of hostilities equally useful to both parties. The French prince employed the interval to revisit the continent, and collect a numerous band of auxiliaries: the marshal profited by his absence to detach more of the confederates from his interests. At the termina-

Dec. 6.

Dec. 20.

⁵ Ep. Honor. apud Raynald. i, 232.

⁶ Paris, 245. Dunstap. 78, 79. Rym. i. 216.

CHAP.
II.1217.
April 30.Battle of
Lincoln.

May 14.

May 18.

tion of the armistice hostilities recommenced with the siege of Montsorel by the royalists. To relieve the fortress, the confederate army, to the number of six hundred knights and twenty thousand men, marched from London under the command of the count of Perche. Its route was marked by every kind of excess, particularly on the part of the foreign infantry, whose nakedness was clothed, and poverty enriched, at the expense of the natives. The royalists did not wait their approach: and the confederates, instead of pursuing the fugitives, entered Lincoln amidst the acclamations of the inhabitants, and besieged the castle, which was gallantly defended by a celebrated heroine, Nichola de Camville. Pembroke immediately summoned the tenants of the crown to meet him at Newark, and was able to number among his followers four hundred knights with their esquires, two hundred and fifty cross-bowmen, and a numerous body of infantry. Three days were employed in marshalling the army, and in performing the duties of religion. For the legate had given a religious character to the expedition. He exhorted the soldiers to fight for their God, their king, and their country; excommunicated all their opponents; and imparted to the combatants the privileges usually granted to the crusaders. They marched from Newark in seven divisions with white crosses sewed on their breasts: the bowmen kept a mile in advance,

May 19.

and the baggage a mile in the rear. This disposition deceived the confederates, who, taking the baggage for a second army, unwisely shut themselves up within the walls, and at the same time by way of bravado made a brisk assault on the castle. But the bowmen, who had been admitted by a postern into the fortress, thinned with their arrows the ranks of the assailants, and, by killing the horses of the knights, laid them in their armour on the ground. The rest of the royalists wheeling round, burst open, after a sharp conflict, the northern gate : and at the same moment a sortie was made from the castle. Dismay and confusion now spread through the ranks of the barons. The most spirited, unable to withstand the torrent that rushed into the city, were carried before it : the crowd ran to the opposite portal : but the narrow and winding passage was soon choaked, and the fugitives were compelled to recoil on their pursuers. The meaner combatants met with no mercy : but little noble blood was spilt by the victors, who, prompted by relationship or the hope of ransom, sought not to slay, but to capture, their enemies. The count of Perche alone lost his life. He fought in a churchyard, till his horse was killed : and when a voice called out to him to accept of quarter, he replied with an oath that he would never surrender to an English traitor. Irritated by the reproach, a soldier thrust his pike through the eye of the

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II.

count's visor into his brain. The number of the captives amounted to three earls, eleven barons, and four hundred knights. Two hundred others escaped by different roads to London: the foot soldiers, seeking to follow them, were all massacred by the inhabitants of the villages which lay in their route.

This victory, which secured the crown on the head of the young king, was called in the quaint language of the time, "the fair of Lincoln." There were few of the conquerors who were not enriched by it. As soon as resistance ceased, the city, which had long been distinguished by its attachment to the barons, was given up to pillage. Even the privileges of the churches could not save them from the rapacity of the royalists. But the fate of the women and children was more deplorable. When the gate was forced, they crowded for security into the boats on the river. Some sank under the weight: others were lost by mismanagement: and of the fugitives the greater part was drowned.⁷

Defeat of
the French
fleet.

The destruction of his army confined Louis within the walls of London: where, though he had built up all the gates except one, and had compelled the citizens to renew their oaths of allegiance, he was perpetually alarmed with the discovery of conspiracies against him. His only hope rested on the exertions of his consort,

⁷ See Paris, 247—249. Dunstap. 80—82. Waverley, 183. Mailros, 194. Gul. Armor. 90.

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II.

Aug. 24.

Blanche of Castile, who in person solicited aid from the most powerful of the French nobles. At length an armament of eighty large vessels, besides galleys and smaller ships, put to sea from Calais under the command of the celebrated pirate, Eustace le Moine. To oppose this formidable fleet Hubert de Burgh, the justiciary, had collected forty sail from the cinque ports ; but the disparity of force was so alarming, that several knights refused to embark, under the pretence that they were not acquainted with the manner of naval engagements. Nor was Hubert himself unaware of the danger. Before his departure he received the sacrament in private ; and gave the most positive orders that the castle of Dover should not be surrendered to the enemy on any terms, not even to save his own life, in the event of his being made prisoner. The English were soon in sight of the French, sailed past them, as if their object were to surprise Calais, and suddenly tacking bore down in a line on their rear. The bowmen and archers began the engagement with a volley of arrows : as soon as the ships came in contact, they were fastened together with chains and hooks : powder of quick lime was scattered in the air, that it might be carried by the wind into the eyes of the enemy : and the English, leaping on board with axes in their hands, rendered the ships unmanageable by cutting the rigging. The French, unaccustomed to this manner of fighting, made

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II.

but a feeble resistance ; and only fifteen vessels out of the whole number escaped. One hundred and fifteen knights with their esquires, and more than eight hundred inferior officers, were taken. Eustace, who had secreted himself in the hold of his ship, offered a large sum for his ransom : but Richard Fitzroy, one of John's illegitimate children by a daughter of the earl Warenne, spurned the proposal, and instantly struck off his head, which was afterwards carried on a pole from town to town, as a proof of the victory.⁸

Louis
abandons
the enter-
prise.

It was now evident that the hopes of Louis were at an end. Instead of fighting for the crown of England, he was compelled to negotiate for his personal safety. A treaty of peace was signed at Lambeth, by which the prisoners on both sides were liberated ; an amnesty was granted to the English adherents of Louis ; and that prince with his foreign associates was allowed to return in safety to France. For conditions so favourable we are told that he was indebted to a promise confirmed upon oath, that on his accession to the French crown, he would restore to Henry all the provinces which had belonged to Henry's father. Though no such promise appears in the treaty, it is probable that it was made, from the manner in which it was frequently though ineffectually urged by the king on later occasions : still it must appear

Sep. 11.

⁸ Paris, 250, 251, with the Var. lect. Waverley, 183. Mailros, 193. Gul. Armor, 90.

strange that the English ministers, with the heir of the French monarchy at their merey, should have been satisfied with a delusive engagement, which it was probable that Louis would never have the will, or if he had the will, would never have the power, to execute.⁹

The departure of Louis secured the crown to Henry: but the young king had not a single relation to whom he could recur for advice, or to whom he might intrust the care of his interests. Even the queen mother, who by her misconduct had already forfeited the confidence of the nation, abandoned her son to hasten back to France, and marry her former lover, the count of La Marche. But Honorius, as feudal superior, declared himself the guardian of the orphan; and commanded Gualo to reside near his person, watch over his safety, and protect his just rights. The legate discharged his trust with fidelity, and found in the earl marshal a coadjutor actuated by the same zeal, and concurring in the same sentiments. The itinerant justices were ordered to summon all knights and freemen to their courts, and to administer to them an oath, that they would keep the king's peace; would observe the good laws and rightful customs of the realm; and at the command of the king and council would assemble and oppose the enemies of the king and kingdom.¹⁰ The

Second
confirmation
of the
charter.

⁹ Paris, 251; Rym. i. 221.

¹⁰ Dunst. i. 86.

CHAP.

II.

1218.
Feb. 22.

charter was again confirmed, but with additional alterations. A clause was added, ordering the immediate demolition of every castle built or rebuilt since the commencement of the civil war: and the chapters regarding the forests and warrens were withdrawn, to form a new instrument, called the charter of forests. By this all forests enclosed since the death of king Richard were thrown open: all outlawries for offences of the forest incurred within the same period, were reversed: the punishment for killing the king's venison was commuted into a heavy fine or a year's imprisonment: the courts of the foresters were regulated, unjust tolls abolished, and the right to cultivate and improve their own lands was confirmed to the holders of estates within the royal forests.¹¹ At the same time, to prevent the diminution of the revenue, a law was passed, prohibiting the king's ministers, during his minority, to put the great seal to any charter or letter of confirmation or sale, or alienation, or gift in perpetuity, and declaring beforehand all such instruments invalid and of no effect.¹²

Rivalry
between
the minis-
ters.

The late contest had generated a spirit of insubordination, which bore with impatience the restraint of legitimate authority: and the barons of the two parties frequently betrayed the animosity which still rankled in their breasts, by

¹¹ Brady, ii. App. N^o. 145.

¹² Ibid, N^o. 146.

deeds of outrage or messages of defiance. The legate and marshal sought to heal these wounds by conciliation. Minor transgressions were prudently overlooked: but they visited with severe punishment those excesses, the neglect of which would have argued weakness or timidity on the part of the administration. By degrees tranquillity was restored; and in the autumn Gualo returned to Rome. He was succeeded by Pandulf, who followed the example of his predecessor, and watched with solicitude over the interests of the young king. His presence was rendered the more necessary by the death of the earl marshal: after which the exercise of the royal authority was intrusted to Hubert de Burgh, the justiciary; the custody of the royal person to Peter des Roches, bishop of Winchester. With the former the reader is already acquainted: Des Roches was a Poitevin, who had enjoyed the confidence of John, and more than once had been appointed by him guardian of the kingdom. These ministers were rivals: if the justiciary possessed a greater share of power, the bishop enjoyed more opportunities of cultivating the friendship of his pupil: and while the one sought the support of the native families, the other proclaimed himself the protector of the foreigners, whom the policy of John had settled in the island. The presence of Pandulf was a constant check on the ambition of these rivals: by his letters and speeches he reproved

Nov. 22.

1219.

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II.

1220.
May 17.

1221.

their negligence, and stimulated their industry: and by his advice the justiciary and chancellor were made to swear, that during the minority they would not dispose of any of the great fiefs of the crown. He repaired to Wales, and restored peace on the borders: he met the king of Scots at York, and negotiated a peace between the two kingdoms: and by his letters and services he greatly contributed to prolong the truce between England and France.¹³ As doubts had been raised respecting the coronation at Bath, that ceremony was again performed with the accustomed solemnity by the archbishop, who, with the permission of Honorius, had returned to England: and the next year Alexander of Scotland, married at York, Joanna, the eldest of the two sisters of Henry, and did homage to his brother-in-law. At the same time one of the Scottish princesses, who had so long been in the custody of the English crown, was also married to Hubert: the other remained single: but a hint was given that Henry meant to associate her with himself on the throne. Pandulf immediately returned to Rome.

¹³ For the services of Pandulf, see his letters in Rym. i. 235—237. 240, 241. It appears that the treaty which William king of Scotland had been compelled to make with John, was considered so burthensome or so disgraceful, that Alexander had applied to the pontiff, to examine it and pronounce according to law, whether it were binding or not. Honorius referred the matter to Pandulf. Ibid. 235. It is singular that the substance at least of that treaty has not been preserved. We are also ignorant of Pandulf's decision.

CHAP.

II.

Henry de-
clared of
age.

During the contest between John and the barons that prince had lavishly distributed the crown lands among his partisans as well foreigners as natives: and those, who had the command of the royal castles at his death, pertinaciously refused to give them up to the government, alleging that they kept them in trust for the king during his minority. To wrest these fortresses from the hands of the powerful vassals who held them, was an important but difficult object. Honorius had instructed Pandulf to insist that no individual should hold at the same time the custody of more than two of the royal castles: he then ordered the bishop and justiciary to demand from the holders all escheats and wardships; and at last solemnly declared, at the request and with the assent of the great council, that Henry was of sufficient age to have the free disposal of his lands, castles, and wards, though not to plead or be impleaded in courts of justice. Hubert immediately in the king's name demanded the surrender of the wards and castles: and the earls of Chester and Albemarle in return made a fruitless attempt to surprise the city of London. Their conduct was arraigned by Hubert, and excused by Des Roches. The discontented barons determined to keep the Christmas at Northampton: but Henry proceeded to that town with the archbishop and bishops, and so numerous a train of earls and knights, that his opponents were intimidated,

1223.
Dec. 25.

CHAP.

II.

Submission and
exile of
Fawkes.

solicited his pardon, and abandoned all their pretensions.¹⁴

Another event followed, which established the authority of Hubert, and induced his rival to banish himself from the island, under the pretence of making a pilgrimage to the holy land. Among the foreigners enriched by John was a ferocious and sanguinary ruffian, named Fawkes, who held the castle of Bedford by the donation of that monarch. At the assizes at Dunstable he had been amerced for several misdemeanours in the sum of three thousand pounds: but instead of submitting to the sentence, he waylaid the judges at their departure, and seizing one of them, Henry de Braibrock, confined him in the dungeon of the castle. Hubert willingly grasped at the opportunity of wreaking his vengeance on a partisan of the bishop of Winchester: and the king was induced to invest in person the fortress of this audacious rebel. Two towers of wood were raised to such a height, as to give the archers a full view of the interior of the castle; seven military engines battered the walls with large stones from morning till evening; and a machine, termed a cat, covered the sappers in their attempts to undermine the foundations.

1224.
June 5.

June 16.

¹⁴ Dunst. 136—138. Rym. i. 240. 254. 263. The reason given to the pontiff by the council was, that “the prudence and discretion of Henry was such as to supply the want of age.” Paris Addit. N^o. 1.

Fawkes, who had retired into the county of Chester, had persuaded himself that the garrison would be able to defend the castle for twelve months. But the barbican was first taken by assault; soon afterwards the outer wall was forced, and the cattle, horses, and provender in the adjacent ward, fell into the hands of the victors: a breach was then made in the second wall by the miners, and the royalists, though with considerable loss, obtained possession of the inner ward: a few days later the sappers set fire to the props which they had placed under the foundations of the keep; one of the angles sank deep into the ground; and a wide rent laid open the interior of the fortress. The garrison now despaired of success. They planted the royal standard on the tower; and sent the women to implore the king's mercy. But Hubert resolved to deter men from similar excesses by the severity of the punishment. The knights and others to the number of eighty were hanged: the archers were sent to Palestine to fight against the Turks; and Fawkes, who now voluntarily surrendered himself, being stript of his money, jewels, and lands, was banished from the island together with his wife and family.¹⁵

Aug. 13.

The consequences of the improvident grants

¹⁵ Paris, 270. Dunst. 142—145. Annal. Wigorn. 486. I have been more diffuse in relating the particulars of this siege, as it explains the manner in which such operations were conducted.

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II.

Third con-
firmation
of the
charter.
1225.

made by the two last monarchs, now began to unfold themselves. Under the pretence of resisting an invasion threatened by the king of France, Henry assembled a great council, and most urgently demanded an aid. The demand was refused: but the wants of the crown would admit of no delay; and after some negotiation it was stipulated that a fifteenth of all moveables should be granted, but on the condition that the two charters should be solemnly ratified.¹⁶ They had already been confirmed twice since the commencement of his reign: but his officers had laughed at their confirmation, and refused to carry their provisions into effect.¹⁷ But it was no longer necessary for the barons to take up arms: poverty had subdued the reluctance of the king and his ministers: and the two charters were ratified in that form which they have ever since retained. By additional articles it was provided that the widow should have for her dower the third part of all the lands, which had belonged to her husband during the coverture, unless she had been endowed with a smaller portion at the door of the church: that no freeman should lawfully aliene so much of his land, as to render

¹⁶ Brady, ii. App. N^o. 150. The money was to be placed in the treasury: and none of it taken out before the king was of age, unless for the defence of the realm, and in the presence of six bishops and six earls. The fifteenth amounted to 59,000*l*. Paris, Addit. N^o. 1. The ancient mode of laying these imposts will be afterwards explained.

¹⁷ Dunst. i. 151.

himself incapable of performing his services to the lord of the fee: and, as a check on alienations in mortmain, that no one should give his land to a religious house, to hold it again of the same house; nor on the other hand should any religious house receive lands, to lease them out to the donor. Assizes of darrein presentment were sent back to the justices of the bench: the county courts were ordered to be held only once a month: the sheriff's tourn only once in the year: and the view of frankpledge only at Michaelmas. Lastly it was enacted, that all men should enjoy the same liberties, and that escuage or scutage should be levied in the same manner, as in the reign of Henry II.¹⁸

The departure of the bishop of Winchester had left Hubert without a competitor: and though the pontiff had warned the king not to

The fall
of Hubert.

¹⁸ Annal. Burt. 271—273. Stat. at large, Ann. nono Henry III. Paris tells us that two years later, when Henry came of age, he repealed of his own authority the charter of the forests (p. 283): but I have learned to doubt the assertions of that writer, when he is not supported by other documents. He has already told us that in 1223 the archbishop had insisted on the ratification of the charters, that the king promised it, and by his letters ordered inquiries to be made in every county after the liberties enjoyed in the time of Henry II. (p. 266, 267). Unfortunately for the credit of the historian, these letters are still extant, and prove to be exactly of an opposite nature. The sheriff's are to inquire what customs and liberties John had in every county before the war, and to enforce the same for the benefit of the king. See them in Brady, App. N^o. 149.

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II.

make himself a member of one party, but to arbitrate as a parent and sovereign between both, Henry willingly lent to his favourite the whole of his authority. Hubert for several years reigned without control: others were impoverished by the compulsory resignation of the profits which they had made during the minority; he was annually enriched by new grants of land, escheats, and wardships: but while he thus attempted to consolidate his own power, he supplied his enemies with weapons of annoyance by repeated instances of rapacity and ambition. An unsuccessful expedition into France, in which he accompanied the king, gave the first shock to his power: it was followed by the ominous arrival of Peter des Roches, whom Henry received with expressions of the warmest affection.¹⁹ The fall of the favourite was now confidently predicted: every tongue loudly accused his avarice and despotism; and when, on occasion of an inroad by the Welsh, Henry lamented his want of money, he was told that he might easily extort it from Hubert and his relatives, who for years had been accumulating wealth at the expense of the crown. The advice was adopt-

1232

¹⁹ Paris mentions that in the year 1231 Henry determined not to marry the princess Isabella of Scotland, because she was the youngest sister of Hubert's wife (p. 312): yet the truth is, that Isabella had already been married six years to Roger, the son of earl Bigod. Rym. i. 273.

ed: the inferior officers of government were called to account ; and Hubert received an order to answer for all the wardships which he had held, all the rents of the royal demesnes which he had received, and all the aids and fines which had been paid into the exchequer, from the day of his appointment to the office of justiciary: a period including the whole of the present, and a great part of the late reign. Whether it were that he despaired of justice, or that he was conscious of guilt, he fled to the priory of Merton. At first the king determined to take him away by force, and for that purpose dispatched the mayor of London with an armed body of citizens: but on more mature deliberation, and at the petition of his only friend the archbishop of Dublin, the space of five months was granted him to prepare for his trial.²⁰ Sep. 3.

Hubert, finding himself at liberty, left his sanctuary, and proceeded towards Bury St. Edmund's to visit his wife: but the king, who had been persuaded that it was dangerous to permit him to remain at large, dispatched a body of three hundred horsemen with orders to arrest and convey him to the Tower. The earl was in bed when he heard of their approach. He arose in haste, fled naked to the parish church of Boisars, and on the steps of the altar, with the host in one hand, and a cross in the other,

He is imprisoned, and released.

²⁰ Paris. 311. 317—319.

- CHAP. II. awaited the arrival of his pursuers. They had no order to take his life; but placing him on horseback, and tying his feet under the belly, proceeded with their captive towards the metropolis. Henry, however, was aware, that this violation of the privileges of the church would excite remonstrances and opposition. The prisoner was carried back to his sanctuary: and the sheriff of Essex was charged, under penalty of death to seize his person, whenever he should attempt to escape. But his escape was rendered impracticable by a deep moat which had been dug, and a line of palisades which had been drawn, round the church: and on the fortieth day hunger or despair induced the unfortunate earl to surrender himself to his guards, by whom he was conducted to the Tower.
- Sept. 27. Henry ordered him to be set at liberty, and to appear in Cornhill before the court of his peers. When the accusations against him had been read, Hubert replied that he should offer no defence; but that he placed his body, his lands, and his chattels at the king's pleasure. The judges deliberated: they agreed that if judgment were pronounced, they must condemn him to forfeiture and death; and therefore, with the permission of the prosecutors, recommended his case to the consideration of the king. An award, to which all parties consented, was at length given: the earl forfeited to the crown his goods and chattels, with the lands which he
- Nov. 11.

held in chief of the king, retaining for himself and his heirs his patrimonial inheritance, and the lands which he held of mesne lords: four earls undertook to keep him in safe custody in the castle of Devises till he should enter the order of the knights templars, in the event of his wife's death, or should be discharged by direction of the king and great council: and Henry pledged his word not to grant him any additional favour, nor to inflict on him any additional punishment.²¹ But the next year dissensions arose between the king and the barons, and the custody of the castle was given to a retainer of the bishop of Winchester. Hubert, who dreaded to fall into the power of his enemy, dropped from the wall into the moat during the obscurity of the night, and made his way to a neighbouring church. Here he was immediately surrounded by the sheriff and his officers: but in a few days a party of horse overpowered his guards, and conducted him to the earl of Pembroke in Wales. When peace was restored between the king and the barons, by the good offices of Edmund, the new archbishop of Canterbury, Hubert was included in the pacification, readmitted into the council, and restored to his estates and honours.²²

1233.
Oct. 12.

Oct. 30.

1234.
Apr. 28.

²¹ Dunst. 203, 209. 221. Paris, 319—322. The mistakes of the last writer are to be corrected by the record, Pat. 17. Hen. III. m. 9. apud Brady, ii. App. N^o. 152.

²² Paris, 327, 328. 310, 311. Dunstap. 221. Brady, ii App.

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II.

Henry's reign lasted more than half a century. Till the fall of Hubert, he was either a minor, or under the control of that minister : afterwards he was his own master ; had the choice of his own ministers ; and became responsible for the measures of government. But the transactions which fill the next forty years, are so numerous, and frequently so unconnected, that were they related in the order of time, the perplexed and broken narrative could only distract and fatigue the attention of the reader. It will therefore prove more convenient, and at the same time more interesting, to class the most important events under the three distinct heads, of the king's wars with foreign powers, his transactions with the pope, and his disputes with his barons.

Disputes
with Scot-
land.

I. 1. During the whole of Henry's reign the harmony between England and Scotland was never interrupted by actual hostilities : yet several subjects of altercation arose, which are deserving of notice, because they prove that the pretensions of superiority, afterwards realized by Edward, were as fiercely maintained by his father. The reader has already seen, that Alexander, the second of that name, though he had done homage to king John, readily lent his aid to the discontented barons. When Louis re-

Nº. 154. Yet five years later a new attack was made upon Hubert, from which he extricated himself by making a present of four castles to Henry. Par. 463.

CHAP.

II.

1221.
June 25.

turned to France, the Scottish king was compelled to submit. He did homage to Henry, and a few years later married Jane, the sister of the young king, a connexion which rendered both princes the more willing to adjust their mutual differences without the aid of the sword. When Henry became his own master, Alexander demanded the restoration of the three northern counties as his undoubted inheritance, and the repayment of the fifteen thousand marks, received from William by John, which, it was now contended, had not been imposed as a fine, but given as a dower to the two Scottish princesses, who were to have been married to Henry himself, and to his brother Richard.²³ The king of England not only resisted these claims, but maintained that the homage which Alexander had already done both to him and his father, had been liege homage for the crown of Scotland; and prevailed on the pope Gregory IX. to exhort the king of Scots by letter, to fulfil the solemn stipulations which he had made.²⁴ After a tedious negotiation, a compromise was

1234.

²³ When this interpretation of the treaty was objected to Hubert, who had married the elder sister, he replied that he knew of no such conditions. The princesses had been delivered to John, to marry them to whom he pleased, with the advice of his barons.—Paris, Addit. N^o. 1.

²⁴ Rym. i. 334, 335. The Scottish writers say the homage was for lands in England. Mail. 195. Ford. ix. 31. Yet there is reason to believe that Alexander did not at that time hold any lands in England. See Rym. ii. 266.

CHAP.

II.

1237.

Sept.

mutually accepted under the auspices of the cardinal Otto. The Scottish king renounced all his claims, and received in lieu of them grants of land in Tynedale and at Penrith, to the yearly value of two hundred pounds : and consented to perform a new homage for his new acquisition.²⁵ The question respecting the nature of his former homage remained undecided for the present, but was revived after the death of Jane. Alexander contended that he did not, and would not hold a particle of Scotland under the crown of England : and Henry, to enforce his pretensions, assembled a numerous army at Newcastle. The Scottish king thought it prudent to negotiate ; and consented to an arrangement, by which, though he eluded the express recognition of feudal dependance, he seems to have conceded to Henry the whole substance of his demand. He promised and swore that he would always bear good faith and love to his dear and liege lord Henry, king of England, and would never enter into alliance with the enemies of Henry or of his heirs, unless they should first unjustly aggrieve him : and his bishops, earls, and barons swore, that they and their heirs would never aid Alexander or his successors to break, but would do all in their power to induce him and them to observe, this promise.²⁶

1244.
Aug. 13.

²⁵ Rym. i. 375.

²⁶ Paris, 568. Rym. i. 429.

Alexander was succeeded by his son of the same name, and in his ninth year. Henry, in virtue of his superiority, solicited a bull, prohibiting any bishop to crown the young prince without the previous permission of his liege lord; but Innocent IV. refused the application, on the ground that the apostolic see was not accustomed to grant such prohibitions.²⁷ Soon afterwards Alexander, in consequence of a treaty concluded by his father, came to York to marry Margaret the daughter of Henry:²⁸ and did homage to the king “for Lothian and the “other lands which he held of the English “crown.”—But when he was summoned to do homage for his kingdom also, a homage, says the historian, which had been done by many of his predecessors,²⁹ he was advised to reply, that he came to York to marry the princess, not to treat on matters of state; and that the demand was of too great importance for him to return an answer before he had consulted his barons.³⁰ But Scotland was at this period in a state of anarchy. An association was formed to dissolve the connexion with England: Robert de Ros and John Baliol were named regents: and by

CHAP.

II.

1249.

July 8.

1251.

Dec. 26.

1255.

²⁷ Rym. i. 463.²⁸ On this occasion the English court displayed all its magnificence. One thousand knights in robes of silk attended the bride on the morning of her nuptials. Paris, 716.²⁹ Prout evidenter in chronicis multis locis scribitur. Paris, 718. Yet Paris died before the great dispute on this subject under Edward I.³⁰ Par. *ibid.*

CHAP.
II.

their orders the young queen was separated from the company of her husband, and confined to a remote part of the castle of Edinburgh. The king took the nobles of the opposite faction under his protection; ordered his military tenants to join him at York; and sent before him the earl of Gloucester and Robert Mansel, who with the aid of their friends obtained admission into the castle, and set at liberty the king and queen. They visited their father, who appointed a new regency, punished the former members, and acted with all the authority of a feudal superior; though, to allay the jealousy of the Scots, he repeatedly declared that these measures should form no precedent injurious to the rights and liberties of the king or people of Scotland.³¹

With
Wales.

2. Of Wales the native sovereign was Llewellyn, usually addressed by Henry with the title of prince of Aberthraw, and lord of Snowdun. He was the vassal of the English crown; but a vassal more inclined to dispute than obey the authority of his superior. He was also brother-in-law to Henry, having married Jane, a natural child of John, by Agatha, daughter to the earl Ferrers: but this union had not rendered him the less disposed to assert the rights, or revenge what he deemed the wrongs, of his country. The borderers of both nations were men of fe-

³¹ Rym. i. 558, 559, 560, 562, 565. Duns. 307. Mail. 220.

rocious habits, inured to rapine and bloodshed, and always eager to invade their neighbours when it could be done with the hope of impunity. Their incursions were generally distinguished by deeds of barbarity, which proved that with them plunder was but a secondary object. They were accustomed to murder their captives in cold blood, and to mangle the carcasses of the slain : and instead of carrying off the cattle of the enemy, would drive them into the barns and houses, that they might consume them in the same flames with the buildings.³² To complain was fruitless : the aggressor, to whatever party he belonged, could exhibit a long catalogue of trespasses committed by his opponents, and would contend that his own conduct had been regulated by a just regard to the principle of retaliation. Henry often led his army into Wales, and was as often compelled to return foiled and discontented. Llewellyn, with the aid of his hills and morasses, kept at bay his more powerful antagonist : and, if the king of England employed himself in raising a fortress to check the excursions of the natives, they were already in his rear, demolishing several castles for the one he had erected. But when Llewellyn died, David, his son and successor, imprisoned Griffith, an illegitimate brother.

³² See several instances in the annals of Margen, 16, 17, 18. Paris, 310. 569, and the annals of Worcester, 488.

- CHAP. The wife of the captive appealed to Henry, who
 II. already had summoned David before him: but
 1241. the Welsh prince appeased his uncle, and de-
 Aug. 15. livered Griffith into his hands. Three years
 later the prisoner was slain in an attempt to
 make his escape from the tower of London.³³
1241. By his death the prince of Aberthraw was freed
 Mar. 1. from the dangerous projects of a rival: to free
 himself from the superiority of the king of
 England, he sought to interest the pope in his
 favour, by offering to hold his principality of
 1245. the Roman church. Innocent refused the offer:³⁴
 and Henry hastened to chastise the disloyalty
 of his nephew. The king fortified a castle on
 the banks of the Conway, ordered a fleet from
 Ireland to ravage the isle of Anglesey, and for-

³³ See the records in Brady, ii. App. N^o. 163—171.

³⁴ Wikes, 45. Walsing. Upod. Neust. 466. If we had no other authority than Paris, we should believe that the offer was accepted, and that Innocent IV., to obtain the yearly payment of 500 marks, accepted the acknowledged vassal of the English crown, as the vassal of the holy see. Par, 550. 552. The amount of the sum is sufficient to throw discredit on the story: and the truth is easily extracted from the original letters, which are still extant. David wrote to the pope, that in his infancy he had been placed by his parents under the particular guardianship of the church of Rome: but that his uncle by violence and threats had compelled him to swear fealty to the throne of England. Innocent replied by ordering two Cistercian abbots to inquire whether these allegations were true, and if they were, to declare that the oath was not binding. Soon afterwards he wrote to the bishop of Carlisle, that he had discovered them to be false, and commanded the prelate to annul any proceedings that might have taken place in consequence of his former letter. West. 319. Rym. i. 425.

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II.

bade under the severest penalty the introduction of provisions or merchandise from the marches into the territory of his enemies. The natives, confined among the mountains of Merioneth and Carnarvon, were exposed to the extremities of want from the absence of provisions, and the inclemency of the winter: but at the death of David, they elected for their chieftains Llewellyn and David, the two sons of Griffith, who solicited the clemency of the king of England, became his vassals, and bound themselves to serve in his wars with five hundred of their subjects.³⁵

1246.

3. The reader will recollect that necessity had extorted from Louis of France a promise to restore Normandy, Maine, and Anjou, whenever he should succeed to the crown. Philip his father died in 1223. The English ministry summoned him to perform his engagement, and received what must have been anticipated, a peremptory refusal. He was no longer (was his answer) bound by the treaty, since it had already been broken in two instances by the king of England, who had compelled the confederate barons to purchase his favour with large sums of money, and had to the present day withheld from them the liberties specified in the great charter. Nor was Louis content with a mere refusal. As soon as the truce between the two

With
France.1223.
July 14Loss of
Poitou.

³⁵ Paris, 470, 480, 506, 545, 551, 603.

CHAP
I I.
1224.
July.

nations expired, he republished the original sentence of forfeiture against king John, entered Poitou with a numerous army, took possession of Rochelle and the other towns by force or bribery, and extended his conquest to the right bank of the Garonne. The English ministry had convened a parliament of the barons at Northampton: but their deliberations were interrupted by the violence of Fawkes: and the siege of the castle of Bedford employed the better part of the summer. At Christmas, after a quarrelsome debate, and the confirmation of the charters, an aid of a fifteenth was granted the king: and before Easter, Richard, his younger brother, was sent to Bourdeaux, under the guidance of the earl of Salisbury, with a force, too small indeed to attempt any conquest, but sufficiently numerous to defend from insult the province of Gascony. At the request of the papal legate both crowns agreed to an armistice for twelve months, before the expiration of which the king of France died, and was succeeded by his son Louis IX., in the twelfth year of his age.³⁶ The troubles which followed his accession, and the hostility of the most powerful of the peers to Blanche the queen mother, and the council of regency, offered to Henry, who had now reached, his twentieth year, a most favourable opportunity

1225.
Apr.

1226.
Nov. 3.

³⁶ The fables respecting his death in Paris, 232, may be compared with the accounts given by eye-witnesses in Spandanus, p. 93.

CHAP.

II.

of regaining the patrimony of his ancestors. The king was eager to distinguish himself in so honourable an enterprise: but he also was entangled in quarrels with his barons; and his minister conceived it dangerous to his own interests, either to quit England, or to be separated from his royal master. Year after year the armistice was renewed, till Hubert deemed it politic to yield, in appearance at least, to the clamour that was raised against him. Repeated solicitations had been received from the natives of Guienne: the Poitevin barons had offered to transfer their allegiance to Henry: and many of the Normans had assured him of their undiminished attachment to the representative of the house of Rollo. It was therefore determined that the king should sail to the assistance of Peter of Dreux, in right of his wife count of Bretagne, who had openly rebelled against Louis. All the barons of England and Ireland, with the princes of Wales, assembled at Portsmouth: and Henry, in the confidence of youth, fancied himself already the conqueror of France, when he was informed that the shipping, which had been provided, was not sufficiently numerous to carry one half of the army. In an agony of rage he unsheathed his sword, called Hubert a traitor, and was in the act of striking him, when his arm was arrested by the interposition of the earl of Chester. As it was too late in the season to wait for the arrival of another fleet,

Expedi-
tion to
Bretagne.

1229.
Sep. 29.

CHAP. II. the council deferred the expedition to the next year; and during the winter Hubert found means to justify himself in the opinion of his master.

1230. The next spring Henry sailed to St. Malo, and
May 3. advanced as far as Nantes: while Louis took Angers, Ancenis, and Oudon. Of the succeeding operations, if any operations took place, we have no account. It is said that the king, instead of seeking the enemy, wasted his time in parties of pleasure, refused an invitation from the malcontents in Normandy, proceeded to Gascony to receive the homage of the natives, Oct. 26. revisited Nantes, and returned to England. Our historians attribute this conduct to the pernicious influence of Hubert, who was accused, probably without foundation, of receiving a yearly pension from the French queen. A body of five hundred knights and one thousand mercenaries was left with the count of Bretagne, who retook Angers, and burnt a few towns in Normandy.³⁷

Expedi-
tion to
Guienne.

In an age, unable to appreciate any but military merit, the issue of this inglorious expedition added little to the reputation of Henry. He was generally considered as a coward, afraid to fight for the inheritance of his fathers: and his name was made the constant subject of censure and ridicule in the effusions of the Provençal poets.

³⁷ Paris, 306. 310. Duns. 201. I have related the occurrence at Portsmouth on the faith of Paris, but am inclined to doubt the accuracy of the story.

It was not, however, that he wanted the inclination ; but, with an exhausted treasury, and involved in repeated struggles with his barons, he had neither the means nor the leisure to engage in foreign expeditions. Ten years elapsed in truces, often broken, and often renewed, during which the king was careful to entertain a constant correspondence with several of the most powerful among the French nobles. The count de la Marche, his father-in-law, whose fealty had always changed with his interests, had done homage to Alphonse, the brother of Louis, lately created count of Poitou. At his return he was sharply reprimanded by Isabella his wife. Her pride, if we may believe report, would not consent that her husband should kneel to any but a crowned head : it is more probable that she wished to preserve the rights of her younger son Richard, to whom his brother Henry had some years before given the county of Poitou. La Marche at her instigation rode back to Poitiers, publicly insulted and defied Alphonse, and retired in the midst of his guard of archers, who marched with their bows bent, and ready to oppose force by force. A war was the natural consequence ; and Isabella implored the aid of her son, the king of England. In a great council held in London, a supply of men and money was demanded : but though Henry urged the request with earnestness, though his brother Richard, who had just returned from the holy

1242
Jan. 27.

CHAP.

II.

May 19.

land, supported it with his eloquence and entreaties, the barons coldly and inexorably replied, that it was the king's duty to observe the truce, as long as it had not been violated by the French monarch. Still Isabella was importunate. His presence, she maintained, was only requisite. Let him but appear : he would be joined by all the friends of his family, and crowds of mercenaries would hasten to his standard. Deceived by these misrepresentations Henry sailed from Portsmouth with his queen and brother, three hundred knights, and thirty hogsheads of silver. He landed at Royan at the mouth of the Garonne : and dispatched ambassadors to Louis. If we may believe Paris, the French king, troubled in conscience by the oath of his father, offered to surrender part of Poitou and Normandy on the condition that Henry should abandon the traitors to the punishment which they deserved : but from the king's own letters it appears that his envoys demanded satisfaction for certain alleged infractions of the armistice ; that no answer was returned ; and that after a certain number of days he declared the armistice to be at an end.³⁸ When he had collected his vassals and allies, he found himself at the head of twenty thousand men : Louis had marched from Paris with an equal number : but his army, to use the expression of the historian,

³⁸ Rym. i. 403, 404.

CHAP. .
II.Battle of
Taillé-
bourg.

July 19.

was a torrent which, as it rolled on, was continually swelled by the influx of tributary streams. The two kings, as if it had been by mutual consent, reached the small town of Taillebourg about the same time : and the hostile armies were separated by the narrow, but deep and rapid, stream of the Charente, the bridge over which was commanded by a fort in the hands of the English. When Henry saw the superior number of the enemy, he complained to the count of the deception which had been practised upon him : but, while he was speaking, the French, with their characteristic impetuosity attacked the bridge. Louis fought at their head : the passage was forced : and the oriflamme, his standard, was unfurled on the left bank of the river. The English, however, made a gallant resistance, and kept the fortune of the day in suspense, till the intelligence arrived, that a large body of the enemy had crossed lower down in boats, and were marching to intercept their retreat. Immediately they broke, fled with precipitation to Saintes, and were followed with such eagerness, that some of the pursuers were enclosed and made prisoners in the city. Henry, for greater security, had withdrawn himself from the mass of the fugitives : but he must have fallen into the hands of the enemy, had he not been rescued by the address of his brother Richard. Unarmed, and with the staff of a pilgrim in his hand, the prince offered himself to the nearest

CHAP.
II.

corps of the French, and demanded to speak to the count of Artois. By that nobleman he was introduced to Louis, who took the opportunity to thank him for the friendly offices which he had rendered to the French knights in Palestine, and at his request assented to an armistice till the following morning. He little thought of the prize, which he suffered by this condescension to slip out of his hands. The two brothers immediately mounted their horses, and reached Saintes during the night.

Battle of
Saintes.

July 20.

With the dawn of the next morning the French were visible from the walls. The count de la Marche immediately sallied out, and by degrees the whole of both armies became engaged. It was not, however, one battle, but a series of separate actions: for the ground was so intersected with lanes and vineyards, that the combatants fought in small parties, and without communication or concert. Much blood was spilt: but, though both kings claimed the victory, Louis remained master of his position.

The result of these two actions had convinced the count of the danger of his situation. His son Hugh clandestinely left Saintes, and threw himself at the feet of the French monarch, who readily pardoned his father on condition that he should withdraw his troops from the English army, should cede to Alphonse the castles which had already been taken, should allow three others to be garrisoned for a time by French

troops as a security for his future fidelity, and for the rest of his possessions should trust to the pleasure and courtesy of Louis. Henry was sitting down to table when he first heard of this transaction: and the messenger was followed by another, informing him of a secret agreement between the men of Saintes and Louis, to introduce the French army into the city during the night. After a short consultation it was determined to retire to Blaye: but the flight was so rapid, that the ornaments of the royal chapel and the military chest were abandoned to the enemy. Louis did not follow the king: a fatal dysentery began to prevail in his army: and the loss of eighty bannerets, and, if we may believe Paris, of twenty thousand men, admonished him to terminate the campaign. A truce for five years was concluded equally to the satisfaction of both monarchs.³⁹

³⁹ In this account I have compared the French historians Nangis and Gaguin with Paris, 514—526. But we possess another narrative of the campaign by Henry himself. According to this he might have occupied Taillebourg, or have destroyed the bridge over the Charente, had he not been perfidiously persuaded to grant a truce to the lord of the town, who offered to return to his allegiance. But when he saw the multitude of the enemy, he ordered, with the advice of his council, an immediate retreat to Saintes. The French endeavoured to surprise him there, but were repulsed with loss. Two days afterwards he retired to Pons: and the count de la Marche abandoned the castle and town of Saintes, which were taken by the French. The king continued his retreat: and the garrison of Pons deserted to the enemy. He fortified Blaye, and waited for the event on the opposite bank of the Garonne: but Louis, after he had remained a fortnight in the neighbourhood, re-

CHAP.

II.

Conclusion of
peace.

It was the custom of the age, when opposite claims could not easily be reconciled, to prevent the resumption of hostilities by the repeated renewal of truces. Had Louis been left to his own judgment, peace with England would soon have been signed. He still doubted the justice of the title by which he held the provinces formerly belonging to the English princes in France ; and to procure from Henry a renunciation of his rights, would cheerfully have consented to considerable sacrifices. But the French peers laughed at the scruples of their monarch, and contended that he had not the power to aliene the domains of the crown. Negotiations were commenced and interrupted, resumed and suspended : Louis insisted on the cession to him of all claim to Normandy, Maine, Anjou, and Poitou : Henry demanded in return an equivalent : and seventeen years elapsed before the terms could be finally adjusted. The renunciation was at last made : and Louis gave to the king of England the Limousin, Perigord, and Querci, and promised to pay the yearly value of the lands held by the count and countess of Poitou in Xaintogne and the Agenois, and at the death of those princes to transfer them to the

1259.
May 20.

turned into his own territories. This Henry declares to be the truth, and that the reports spread to his prejudice by his enemies are groundless and slanderous. Rym. i. 325—327. By mistake it is printed under the year 1232, the 16th instead of the 26th of Henry.

English crown. Henry, as duke of Guienne, and peer of France, engaged to do homage to the French monarch.⁴⁰ CHAP.
II.

Transac-
tions with
the popes.

II. The history of Henry's transactions with the court of Rome discloses to us a system of oppression, under which the English clergy, by the united influence of the crown and the tiara, were compelled to submit to the most grievous exactions. The christian hierarchy had from the earliest ages been distinguished by a regular gradation of office and authority from the lowest clerk to the bishop of Rome, who was considered as the chief of the episcopal body, and the vicegerent of Christ upon earth. As the northern nations extended their conquests, they diffused their peculiar notions of jurisprudence through the provinces of Europe: these were insensibly incorporated with the external economy of religion: and the constitution of the church became in a great measure assimilated in the ideas of the western christians to the institutions of a feudal kingdom. The pope held the place of the sovereign; the bishops were considered nearly in the light of his barons; and subordinate to the bishops stood the inferior clergy in the quality of sub-vassals. These feudal notions were followed by feudal ceremonies and claims. The bishop, before he entered on the administration of his diocese, swore fealty

⁴⁰ Rym. i. 675. 689.

CHAP.
II.

to the pope : and the priest at his ordination, beside the ancient promise of canonical obedience, did homage to his bishop. Then, as the civil sovereign in his necessities required aid from his barons, and through them from their vassals, so the popes in similar circumstances demanded pecuniary assistance from the bishops, and through them from the rest of the clergy. At first these claims were brought forward with modesty and reserve : nor did the ecclesiastics refuse to relieve the wants, or support the splendour, of him, whom they revered as their spiritual father, and beneath whose protection they reposed in the peaceful possession of their property. But gradually the necessities, and with the necessities the demands, of the pontiffs were multiplied, till they at length excited the remonstrances and opposition both of the clergy and laity. By accepting the donation of Pepin, and by subsequent acquisitions, the bishops of Rome had joined the concerns of temporal princes to the duties of christian prelates : and the wars in which they were compelled to engage, sometimes with their own subjects, sometimes with foreign states, entailed on them expenses far beyond the annual amount of their income. This was generally the situation of the popes who governed the church during Henry's reign. Involved in a long and ruinous contest with the emperor Frederic and his partisans in Italy, overwhelmed with an immense

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II.

load of debt, and forced occasionally to abandon their own dominions for an asylum on this side of the Alps, they looked to the aid of the clergy as the surest expedient for satisfying the claims of their creditors, recruiting their forces, and recovering their former ascendancy. Year after year the English, like every other national church was called upon to contribute towards the support of the Roman see: and though the generosity or patience of the clergy was soon exhausted, their resistance was seldom successful against the authority of the pontiff, supported as it generally was by the authority of the monarch: for the fate of John had proved an awful warning to Henry, who unwilling to provoke the enmity of the pope, concurred in every scheme of exaction, unless he were occasionally deterred by the united clamour of the barons and clergy.

The principal grievances which sprung out of this system, may be reduced to two heads. Tallages.

1. The popes, in imitation of the temporal princes, often required a tallage of the clergy, amounting generally to a twentieth, sometimes to a tenth, and on one or two occasions to a larger share of their annual income. These impositions had been originally introduced in the time of the crusades, and had been justified on the ground, that the recovery of Palestine was an object equally interesting to every christian: and that while the laity cheerfully shed their

CHAP. blood in the sacred cause, the clergy could not
 II. refuse to contribute a small portion of their revenues towards its success. But it was soon discovered that every war in which the pontiffs engaged, was somehow or other connected with the welfare of religion. When the contest commenced between Gregory IX. and the emperor Frederic, that pope demanded an aid of the clergy: as his affairs grew desperate, his demands were repeated: and under his successor Innocent IV. the frequency and amount of these tallages became an intolerable burden. Innocent, indeed, alleged in justification of his conduct, that he was an exile from his dominions; that at Lyons, where he kept his court for ten years, he had no resource but in the contributions of the clergy; and that whatever they gave, was expended in supporting the cause of the church and religion. These reasons, however, did not always convince those who suffered from the annual diminution of their incomes.⁴¹ In many nations they were answered with complaints: in England they experienced

⁴¹ We must except Grosseteste, the celebrated bishop of Lincoln, who, in answer to the king's writ inquiring by what authority he raised a tallage for the use of the pope, replied: *Non est admiratione dignum, quod cœpiscopi nostri et nos in hac parte facimus, sed admiratione multa et indignatione quamplurima esset dignissimum, si etiam non rogati vel jussi aliquid hujusmodi vel etiam majus non fecerimus. Videmus enim exilio relegatos, persecutionibus coangustatos, patrimonio suo spoliatos, et de proprio, unde ut decet sustineantur, non habentes.* Grosset. i. ep. 119.

the most decided opposition. The clergy replied, that they deemed it unjust to furnish money, with the conviction that it would be employed against the emperor, who, though the pope had condemned him, was still to be considered as a catholic prince, since he had offered to submit his quarrel to the decision of a general council—that each church had its own patrimony: nor could the pope with any more justice claim a share in the revenue of *their* churches, than they could claim a share of the revenue of the church of Rome—that, as the law, when it described every thing as belonging to the prince, spoke of his right of superintendence, not of property; so the pre-eminence enjoyed by the pope, imposed on him the duty of watching over all, but gave him no right to dispose of all—and that, if the income of the clergy were more than sufficient for their support, they were obliged to employ the remainder in relieving the wants of the poor, not in furnishing the means of protracting a bloody and destructive war.⁴²

For some time the king and the barons appeared indifferent spectators of this struggle. At length they were induced to interfere by the consideration, that in proportion as the clergy were impoverished, the national burdens would press with additional weight on the laity. Am-

⁴² Annal. Burt. 297.

CHAP. II. bassadors were dispatched to the general council at Lyons, who in firm but respectful language remonstrated against the frequency of the papal exactions. Perhaps the promises which Innocent gave in his reply, were meant only to allay discontent. But if he was sincere, the necessities of his situation soon compelled him to break them : and a new demand of a twentieth from the poorer, and of a larger portion from the more opulent, benefices, awakened an unusual spirit of opposition. The clergy drew up a list of their grievances, sent it to the pontiff, and appealed from him to the next general council : the barons, in bolder terms, warned him of the evils which might probably ensue ; and clearly insinuated their readiness to draw the sword, if it should be necessary, in support of the clergy. Even the king appeared to make common cause with his vassals, and forbade the tallage to be paid under the penalty of his high displeasure. Yet this strong opposition gradually melted away. Henry withdrew his prohibition : the barons relapsed into their former apathy : and the clergy were reduced to compound with the pontiff for eleven thousand marks.⁴³

Provi-
sions.

The second grievance consisted in what were termed papal provisions, by which the pope, suspending for the time the right of the patron, nominated of his own authority to the vacant

⁴³ Annal. Burt. 305—310. Paris, 625. 636. Dunst. 272, 273.

benefice. The consequence was that many Italians possessed livings which should have been conferred on English clergymen: and if some of these resided in the island, the others, after defraying the charge of a substitute to perform the duty received and spent the remainder of the income in foreign countries. This abuse excited loud complaints on the part both of the patrons and the clergy: and the public discontent displayed itself in acts of illegal violence. An association was formed under the title of the commonalty of England; and was clandestinely encouraged by the principal of the barons and clergy. At its head was sir Robert Thwinge, a knight of Yorkshire, who by a papal provision had been deprived of his nomination to a living in the gift of his family. His commands were implicitly obeyed by his associates, who, though they were never more than eighty individuals, contrived by the secrecy and celerity of their motions, to impress the public with an idea that they amounted to a much greater number. They murdered the pope's couriers: wrote menacing letters to the foreign ecclesiastics and their stewards: sometimes seized their persons, threw them privately into dungeons, and compelled them to pay considerable ransoms: and at others carried off the produce of their farms, sold it by public auction, or distributed it among the poor of the neighbourhood. For eight months these excesses continued without any interruption

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II.

from the legal authorities: the national discontent was gratified with the sufferings of the foreigners; and the members of the association, to satisfy the officers of justice, pretended that they acted in virtue of a royal commission. Henry at length interposed his authority; and Thwinge proceeded to Rome to plead his cause before the pontiff. He was successful, and returned with a bull, by which Gregory authorized him to nominate to the living which he claimed; declared that, if ever the rights of the lay patrons had been invaded, it was without his knowledge, and contrary to his intentions; and promised that all future provisions should be confined to those benefices, which were known to be in the gift of the prelates, abbots, and ecclesiastical bodies: a politic answer which, while it wore the semblance of truth, separated the interests of the laity from those of the clergy, and was calculated to render the former unconcerned spectators of the oppression of the latter.⁴¹

Papal concessions.

The clergy felt the probable consequences of this distinction, and loudly expressed their indignation. After many ineffectual attempts they obtained the co-operation of the king and ba-

⁴¹ Paris, 313. 316, 317. 460, 461. Dunst. 206, 207. Rymer, i. 322. It was pretended that Hubert was the secret instigator of these excesses: and his presumed guilt was said to have been the cause of his arrest. Pat. 17. Hen. III. apud Brad. ii. App. N^o, 152.

rons: and in all their remonstrances the provisions were coupled with the tallages as an abuse, which could be no longer endured. To silence their complaints, Innocent reminded them of his wants, and declared that without provisions he could neither reward the services of his most faithful adherents, nor support the necessary officers of his court.⁴⁵ The controversy lasted during the whole of his residence at Lyons. By the death of the emperor, he was at last enabled to return to Rome; and was soon followed by the remonstrances of the English clergy, who stated that the incomes of the foreign ecclesiastics beneficed in England amounted to fifty thousand marks. The pontiff, without admitting the accuracy of the statement, acknowledged and lamented the existence of the grievance: assured them that, if he had ever granted a provision himself, it had been wrung from him by necessity: and proposed, as a temporary remedy, to set aside for certain non-residents eight thousand marks, a sum which might be annually reduced; to compel all other foreign clergymen to reside or resign; and to enable the patrons to present to all benefices, as soon as they became vacant.⁴⁶ Whether the offer was accepted, we know not: but the next year, in consequence of a provision to a living in the

CHAP.

II.

1250.
Dec. 13.1252.
May, 22.⁴⁵ Rym. i. 426. 442.⁴⁶ Rym. i. 471. Paris with his usual exaggeration makes the sum amount to 70,000 marks, p. 740.

CHAP.
II.

1253.
Nov. 3.

diocese of Lincoln, Grosseteste, the celebrated bishop of that see, wrote a spirited letter to the pontiff, in which, after professing obedience to the lawful commands of the apostolic see, he refused to admit the provision, because it emanated from an authority, which had never been granted by Christ to St. Peter or his successors. This remonstrance appears to have made impression on the mind of Innocent. He answered by a bull, in which he again professed his dislike of the practice, empowered all the patrons of benefices in the possession of foreigners, to present to them immediately: and declared that the individuals so presented should and might take possession immediately after the death or resignation of the present incumbents, and in despite of any provision that might hereafter be made by him or his successors.⁴⁷ In this state the controversy remained during the sequel of Henry's reign.

Offer of
the crown
of Sicily.

But in 1254 was opened a new source of extortion. When the Norman adventurers had formerly subdued Sicily and Apulia, they had made their conquests, by a voluntary donation, fiefs of the holy see. As such these two kingdoms had descended to the late emperor Frederic: but during the long war, which he waged against the popes Gregory and Innocent, he was adjudged to have forfeited all the lands which he

⁴⁷ Paris, 749. Annal. Burt. 326—330. Rym. i. 494.

held of the church of Rome : and a resolution, dictated by the experience of the past, was taken to prevent for the future the re-union on the same head of the Sicilian and imperial crowns. Frederic had left by his first wife a son named Conrad king of Germany, by his second, the sister of our Henry, another called after the name of his uncle, and besides these an illegitimate son, Manfred prince of Tarento, who was supposed to have been accessary to the death of his father. On none of the three would Innocent bestow the kingdom of Sicily. He offered it first to Charles of Anjou, brother to Louis of France, then to Richard, the brother of the king of England, and lastly to Henry himself for his second son Edmund. All these princes refused it : Charles on account of the absence of Louis in the crusade ; Richard because he felt himself unequal to the task of subduing the sons of Frederic ; and Henry, that he might not appear to oppose the interests of his young nephew, who was supported by a powerful party in Sicily. Conrad, at the head of a numerous army, marched from Germany ; took, after an obstinate resistance, Capua, Naples, and the other cities of Apulia, which had declared for the pope ; and was preparing to invade Sicily, when the young Henry suddenly died, poisoned, as the suspicions of the public believed, by the contrivance of his elder brother. Innocent immediately repeated his offer of the crown for Edmund :

CHAP.
II.It is ac-
cepted.

1254.

Mar. 6.

and the weak mind of the king, no longer checked by the opposite claim of his nephew, joyfully accepted the dazzling but precarious present. It was agreed with the papal envoy that the young prince should hold Sicily and Apulia as fiefs of the holy see; that Henry with a powerful army should immediately conduct his son to take possession of his dominions: that Innocent should advance to the king one hundred thousand pounds Tournois to enable him to commence the expedition, and should give security for any other sums, which it might be necessary to borrow. The pontiff, when he ratified the treaty, assured the king, who was in Gascony, that if he set out immediately, success was certain; and to stimulate his indolence, informed him that fifty thousand pounds had been deposited at Lyons to be delivered to him the moment he should appear at the head of his army.⁴⁸ In the mean time Conrad died: and a second letter was dispatched to Henry with a request that he would hasten to take advantage of so fortunate an event. Fearful, however, that the opportunity might be lost by delay, Innocent himself proceeded from Rome into Apulia, took possession of the Terra di Lavoro, secured, as he thought, the fidelity of Manfred by confirming to him his

⁴⁸ Rym. i. 477. 502, 511, 512. 514. 516. 893. It was afterwards disputed whether the 100,000 pounds were promised as a gift or a loan. Henry gave up his claim. Rym. i. 895. Four pounds Tournois made one pound sterling.

principality of Tarento, and flattered himself that at the arrival of Henry, the two kingdoms would unanimously admit Edmund for their sovereign. But the perfidious Manfred aspired to the crown himself: and to mask his real views, set up, as the competitor of the English prince, Conradine, the infant son of his brother Conrad. Innocent again endeavoured to hasten the king by describing to him the danger of delay: but his natural indolence or the difficulties of his situation prevented his departure: and the papal army was defeated by Manfred in the vicinity of Troia. Five days afterwards Innocent died.⁴⁹ His successor Alexander IV. pursued the same policy: the crown of the two Sicilies was confirmed to prince Edmund: and the bishop of Bologna was sent to England to give him investiture, and to make the necessary arrangements with his father. It was settled that Sicily and Apulia should form but one kingdom under Edmund, who should hold it of the apostolic see by the yearly payment of two thousand ounces of gold, and who should swear when he did homage, never to accept of the imperial dignity under the penalty of losing his crown, and of incurring excommunication: that Henry should acknowledge himself responsible for all the debts contracted in the prosecution of the business; and that he should, as early as

Nov. 17.

Dec. 2.

Dec. 7.

1255.
Apr. 9.⁴⁹ Rym. i. 535. 538. 564.

CHAP.

II.

But is won
by Man-
fred.

Sep. 18.

possible, convey his son with an army into Apulia.⁵⁰ But in the mean while the prospect of success grew fainter every day. Manfred had gained the last battle by the assistance of a body of Saracens, whom his father had settled in Lucera de' Pagani: and Alexander had sent the cardinal Octavian with the marquess of Hoemburgh at the head of a powerful force to attempt the task of subduing and extirpating the infidels. The two armies remained for several days in presence of each other: but Manfred was busily employed in corrupting the fidelity of the mercenary chieftains opposed to him; and with their connivance surprised and totally routed the papal forces. Alexander informed Henry of this untoward event; but sought to encourage him with the consideration that the whole of Sicily and the Terra di Lavoro were still true to the interests of Edmund, and conjured him to perform his engagements by sending immediately a powerful army.⁵¹ The king wanted not the will but the means to comply: though his barons condemned the impotent attempt, he would not resign the hope of placing his younger son on a throne: and therefore bound himself to defray all the former expenses, and to land with an army in Apulia before the next feast of St. Michael. The debts amounted to ninety

⁵⁰ Rym. i. 894—900. 550. 553.

⁵¹ Rym. i. 561.

CHAP.

II.

1256.
Feb. 5.

thousand pounds:⁵² and the pontiff complained loudly in his letters of the distress to which he was reduced by the negligence of Henry in sending him remittances. His treasury, he said, was totally drained: his court was surrounded by creditors demanding their money, and threatening to seize the lands of the churches on which their debts had been secured: and the forces which had defended the Terra di Lavoro were disbanded, from the impossibility of paying their services.⁵³ To raise money recourse was now had to every expedient which the regal or papal ministers could devise. It was in vain that Henry applied to the lay tenants of the crown: they obstinately refused to grant any aid towards the acquisition of Sicily; and advised him to lay aside the project, on account of the great power of Manfred, who had gradually united all Apulia under his standard; the immense expense which had already been incurred, and which by perseverance would be doubled; and the danger to which England would be exposed from the ambition of its neighbours, if a numerous army were to be sent into Italy.⁵⁴ The refusal of the laity threw the principal part of the burden on the clergy, who were urged to submission by the menace of excommunication on the one side, and of forfeiture on the other. The bishops and

Money
levied on
the clergy.

⁵² In this sum is included a free gift of 20,000 marks promised by Henry to the pope. Rym. i. 397.

⁵³ Rym. i. 561. 581. 593. ⁵⁴ Annal. Burt. 372. Dunst. 319, 320.

CHAP.
II.

abbots saw themselves compelled to accept bills drawn in their name, but without their consent, for the sum of twenty thousand pounds in favour of certain bankers in Venice and Florence:⁵⁵ a tenth part of the annual rents of the clergy was ordered to be paid for five successive years into the exchequer: the goods of clergymen who died intestate, and one year's income of all vacant benefices were reserved to the crown: and the monies collected in England, Ireland, Scotland, and Norway, for the crusade against the infidels were placed at Henry's disposal.⁵⁶ The clergy exhausted themselves in complaints and remonstrances. They appealed to the protection of the pope: they offered the king a free gift of fifty-two thousand marks. But the only indulgence which they obtained, was the permission for the bishops and abbots to deduct from the payment of the tenths the amount of the bills drawn upon them from Italy.

Sicily is
conquered
by Charles
of Anjou.

While Henry thus oppressed the clergy, the disputes between him and his barons began to assume an alarming appearance. Instead of winning a foreign crown for his son, he found it necessary to fight in defence of his own. Yet in proportion as the probability of success decreased, he seemed to cling to the Sicilian project with greater pertinacity: nor would he permit Edmund to resign his claim, or return the

⁵⁵ Rym.

⁵⁶ Rym. i. 549, 550. 552. 595. 599. &c.

CHAP.
II.1263.
Aug. 23.

1265.

1266.
Feb. 26.Henry's
disputes
with his
barons.

donation of Innocent.⁵⁷ In the mean while Manfred triumphed over all his enemies: to Sicily and Apulia he added the march of Ancona and a part of Tuscany: and Urban IV., the successor of Alexander, after requesting the consent of the English prince, offered the crown to Charles of Anjou.⁵⁸ It was accepted: and Charles received the regal dignity at Rome from Clement IV.: but the pontiff, taught by the difficulties in which his predecessors had been involved, refused to bind himself for any debts which might be incurred. The new king, however, raised a powerful army, gained a splendid victory in the plains of Benevento, and by the death of Manfred, who fell in the battle, obtained peaceable possession of the whole kingdom.

III. It was Henry's misfortune to have inherited the antipathy of his father to the charter of Runnymede, and to consider his barons as enemies leagued in a conspiracy to deprive him of the legitimate prerogatives of the crown. He watched with jealousy all their proceedings, refused their advice, and confided in the fidelity of foreigners more than the affection of his own subjects. Such conduct naturally alienated the minds of the nobles, who boldly asserted that the great offices of state were their right, and entered into associations for the support of their pretensions. Had the king possessed the immense re-

⁵⁷ Rym. i. 631. 654. 666. 720.⁵⁸ Rym. i. 769.

CHAP.
II.

venues of his predecessors, he might perhaps have set their enmity at defiance : but during the wars between Stephen and Maud, and afterwards between John and his barons, the royal demesnes had been considerably diminished :⁵⁹ and the occasional extravagance of Henry, joined to his impolitic generosity to his favourites, repeatedly compelled him to throw himself on the voluntary benevolence of the nation. Year after year the king petitioned for a subsidy : and each petition was met with a contemptuous refusal. If the barons at last relented, it was always on conditions most painful to his feelings. They obliged him to acknowledge his former misconduct, to confirm anew the two charters, and to promise the immediate dismissal of the foreigners.⁶⁰ But Henry looked only to the present moment : no sooner were his coffers replenished than he forgot *his* promises, and laughed at *their* credulity. Distress again forced him to solicit relief, and to offer the same conditions. Unwilling to be duped any oftener, the barons required his oath. He swore : and then violated

⁵⁹ The annual income of William the conqueror was 337,000*l.* ; that of Henry did not amount to 30,000*l.* Paris, 579.

⁶⁰ Thus was gradually introduced what has since been considered the constitutional method of opposing the measures of the crown, the refusal of the supplies for the current year. Henry's predecessors were too rich to depend on the aid of their vassals : to resist their will with any hope of success it was necessary to have recourse to the sword. But *his* poverty compelled him annually to solicit relief, and to purchase it by concessions to his parliament.

CHAP.
II.

his oath with as much indifference as he had violated his promise. His next applications were treated with scorn: but he softened their opposition by offering to submit to excommunication, if he should fail to observe his engagements. In the great hall of Westminster the king, barons, and prelates assembled: the sentence was pronounced by the bishops with the usual solemnity: and Henry placing his hand on his breast, added, "So help me God. I will observe these charters, as I am a christian, a knight, and a king crowned and anointed." The aid was granted, and the king reverted to his former habits. It was not, however, that he was by inclination a vicious man. He had received strong religious impressions: though fond of parade he cautiously avoided every scandalous excess: and his charity to the poor, and attention to the public worship, were deservedly admired. But his judgment was weak. He had never emancipated his mind from the tutelage in which it had been held in his youth; and easily suffered himself to be persuaded by his favourites that his promises were not to be kept, because they had been compulsory; being extorted from him in opposition to the just claims of his crown.

On the fall of Hubert de Burgh the king had given his confidence to his former tutor, Peter the Poitevin, bishop of Winchester. That the removal of the minister would be followed by

Ministry
and re-
moval of
Peter des
Roches.
1232.
Dec. 25.

CHAP.

II.

1233.
July 11.1234.
Feb. 2.

the dismissal of the other officers of government, and that the favourite would employ the opportunity to raise and enrich his relatives and friends, is not improbable: but it is difficult to believe, on the unsupported assertion of a censorious chronicler, that Peter could be such an enemy to his own interests as to prevail on the king to expel all Englishmen from his court, and confide to Poitevins and Bretons the guard of his person, the receipt of his revenue, the administration of justice, the custody of all the royal castles, the wardships of all the young nobility, and the marriages of the principal heiresses. But the ascendancy of the foreigners, however great it might be, was not of very long duration. The barons refused to obey the royal summons to come to the council: the earl marshal unfurled the standard of rebellion in Wales; and the clergy joined with the laity in censuring the measures of government. Edmund, the new archbishop of Canterbury, attended by several other prelates, waited on Henry. He reminded the king that his father, by pursuing similar counsels, had nearly forfeited the crown; assured him that the English would never submit to be trampled upon by strangers in their own country; and declared that he should conceive it his duty to excommunicate every individual, whoever he might be, that should oppose the reform of the government, and the welfare of the nation. Henry was alarmed, and pro-

mised to give him an answer in a few weeks. A parliament of the barons was called, and Edmund renewed his remonstrance. The Poitevins were instantly dismissed, the insurgents restored to favour, and ministers appointed, who possessed the confidence of the nation.⁶¹

CHAP.

II.

April 9.

At the age of twenty-nine the king married Eleanor, the daughter of Raymond, count of Provence. The ceremony of her coronation, the offices of the barons, the order of the banquet, and the rejoicings of the people, are minutely described by the historian, who, in the warmth of his admiration, declares that the whole world could not produce a more glorious and ravishing spectacle.⁶² Eleanor had been accompanied to England by her uncle William, bishop elect of Valence, who soon became the king's favourite, was admitted into the council, and assumed the ascendancy in the administration. The barons took the first opportunity to remonstrate: but Henry mollified their anger by adding three of their number to the council, and, that he might be the more secure from their machinations, obtained from the pope a legate to reside near his person. This was the cardinal Otho, who employed his influence to reconcile Henry with the most discontented of the barons. By his advice William returned to the continent. He died in Italy: but the

King's
marriage
1236.
Jan. 14.

Jan. 20.

1238.
Nov. 1.

⁶¹ Paris, 324—335.⁶² Paris, 355. Dunst. 231.

CHAP.
II.New fa-
vourites.

king, mindful of his interests, had previously procured his election to the see of Winchester, vacant by the death of Peter des Roches.

The next favourites were two other uncles of the queen, Peter de Savoy, to whom Henry gave the honour of Richmond, and Boniface de Savoy, who, at the death of Edmund, was chosen archbishop of Canterbury. The natives renewed their complaints, and waited with impatience for the return of Richard, the king's brother, from Palestine: but that prince was induced to espouse the cause of the foreigners, and to marry Sanchia, another of the daughters of Raymond. Even Isabella, the queen mother, dissatisfied that the family of Provence should monopolize the royal favour, sent over her children by her second husband, the count de la Marche, to make their fortunes in England. Alice, her daughter, was married to the young earl of Warenne; Guy, the eldest son, received some valuable presents, and returned to France; William de Valence, with the order of knighthood, obtained an annuity, and the honour of Hertford; and Aymar was sent to Oxford, preferred to several benefices, and at last made bishop of Winchester.⁶³

Opposition
of the ba-
rons.

While Henry was thus careful to provide for his foreign relatives, he frequently found himself reduced to want, and without credit or re-

⁶³ Paris, 439. 491. 637. Dunst. 275.

sources. His more despotic predecessors had expended infinitely larger sums in their foreign expeditions, and the support of their mercenary forces ; and had never hesitated to extort by violence from their subjects whatever monies were deemed necessary by their ambition or rapacity. But the imprudence of John had generated, and the minority of Henry had nourished, a spirit of resistance to the undue exercise of authority : and the relief of the sovereign's wants was assigned by the great charter, not to his own caprice, but to the wisdom or generosity of the prelates and barons. If in their assemblies they consented to grant him an aid, they yet granted it in ill humour : and his acquiescence in the papal exactions from the clergy, with the debts he incurred by accepting the crown of Sicily for Edmund, continued to inflame the public discontent. Associations were formed to redress the grievances of the nation : under the decent pretext of preventing the misapplication of the revenue, a demand was repeatedly made, that the appointment of the officers of state should be vested in the great council ; and at length the constitution was entirely overturned by the bold ambition of Simon de Montfort earl of Leicester.⁶¹

CHAP.
II.

Simon was the younger of the two sons of the count de Montfort, a name celebrated in the

Simon
earl of
Leicester.

⁶¹ Paris, 564, 646.

CHAP.
II.

annals of religious warfare. By the resignation of Amauri, his brother, the constable of France, he had succeeded to the estates of his mother Amicia, the elder of the two sisters and co-heiresses of the late earl of Leicester : his subsequent marriage with Eleanor, the king's sister, had brought within his view the prospect of a crown : and his marked opposition to the extortions of the king and the pontiffs, had secured to him, though a foreigner, the affection of the nobility, the clergy, and the people. Policy required that the king should either not provoke, or should oppress so formidable a subject. But Henry did neither : he on some occasions employed the earl in offices of trust and importance : on others, by a succession of petty affronts, irritated instead of subduing his spirit. Among the inhabitants of Guienne there were many, whose wavering fidelity proved a subject of constant solicitude : and Simon had been appointed, by patent, governor of the province for five years, with the hope that his activity and resolution would crush the disaffected, and secure the allegiance of the natives. They were to the earl years of continual exertion : his conduct necessarily begot enemies : and he was repeatedly accused to the king of peculation, tyranny, and cruelty. How far the charges were true, it is impossible to determine : but his accusers were the archbishop of Bourdeaux, and the chief of the Gascon nobility, who declared

that unless justice were done to their complaints, their countrymen would seek the protection of a different sovereign. When Simon appeared before his peers, he was accompanied by Richard, the king's brother, and the earls of Gloucester and Hereford, who had engaged to screen him from the royal resentment: and the king, perceiving that he could not procure the condemnation of the accused, vented his passion in intemperate language. In the course of the altercation, the word "traitor," inadvertently fell from his lips. "Traitor!" exclaimed the earl, "if you were not a king, you should repent of that insult." "I shall never repent of any thing so much," replied Henry, "as that I allowed you to grow and fatten within my dominions." By the interposition of their common friends they were parted. Henry conferred the dutchy and government of Guienne on his son Edward: but the earl returned to the province, nor would he yield up his patent without a considerable sum as a compensation for the remaining years of the grant. Fearing the king's enmity, he retired into France; and was afterwards reconciled to him through the mediation of the bishop of Lincoln.⁶⁵

Though Richard had frequently joined the barons in opposing his brother, he could never

Richard
chosen
king of the
Romans.

⁶⁵ Paris, 400, 700, 713, 721, 722, 743. The king had originally conferred the dutchy of Guienne on his brother Richard: but took it from him on the birth of prince Edward. Richard ever afterwards opposed the king in all matters relative to that country. Paris, 722.

CHAP.

II.

be induced to invade the just rights of the crown.

He was as much distinguished by his economy as Henry was by his profusion: and the care with which he husbanded his income, gave him the reputation of being the most opulent prince in Europe. Yet he allowed himself to be dazzled with the splendour of royalty, and incautiously sacrificed his fortune to his ambition. In the beginning of the year 1256, the archbishops of Cologne and Mentz, with the elector palatine, chose him at Frankfort king of the Romans: a few weeks later the archbishop of Triers, the king of Bohemia, the duke of Saxony, and the marquess of Brandenburg, the other four electors, gave their suffrages in favour of Alphonso, king of Castile.⁶⁶ It is strange that Richard, with the example of Sicily before his eyes, and the certainty of meeting with a powerful rival, should have accepted the offer: but he was told that his riches would ensure his success; a deputation of prelates and nobles arrived to conduct him to his imaginary dominions; and the new king of the Romans was crowned at Aix-la-Chapelle in the presence of most of the princes of the empire.⁶⁷ It was, however, in an evil hour for England, that he

Dec. 23.
1257.

May 17.

⁶⁶ Wikes (51) gives us the different sums promised to the seven electors on this occasion: but he is certainly mistaken in several of the princes whom he calls electors, as is evident from the letter of the pope, quoted by Spondanus, p. 198.

⁶⁷ Rymer. i. 621, 622. Annal. Burt. 376.

CHAP.
II.Commission to re-
form the
state.

departed for Germany. The discontented barons, no longer awed by his presence, associated to overturn the throne, under the guidance of the earl of Leicester high steward, the earl of Hereford high constable, the earl marshal, and the earl of Glocester. The circumstances of the times were favourable to their views. An unproductive harvest had been followed by a general scarcity: and the people were willing to attribute their misery not to the inclemency of the seasons, but to the incapacity of their governors.⁶⁸ Henry called a great council at Westminster; and on the third day the barons assembled in the hall in complete armour. When the king entered, they put aside their swords; but Henry, alarmed at the unusual appearance, exclaimed, "Am I then your prisoner?" "No, sir," replied Roger Bigod, "but by your partiality to foreigners, and your own prodigality, the realm is involved in misery. Wherefore we demand that the powers of government be delegated to a committee of barons and prelates, who may correct abuses, and enact salutary laws." Some altercation ensued, and high words passed between the earl of Leicester, and William de Valence, one of the king's brothers. Henry, however, found it necessary to submit; and it was finally agreed, that he should

1258.
May 2.

⁶⁸ Wikes, 52. Wheat was sold at the almost unprecedented price of 9s. the quarter. Richard sent from Germany forty vessels laden with corn. Par. 326.

CHAP.
II.

solicit the pope to send a legate to England, and modify the terms on which he had accepted the kingdom of Sicily: that he should give a commission to reform the state to twenty-four prelates and barons, of whom one half had been already selected from his council, the other half should be named by the barons themselves in a parliament to be holden at Oxford; and that, if he faithfully observed these conditions, measures should be taken to pay his debts, and to prosecute the claim of Edmund to the crown of the two Sicilies.⁶⁹

The mad
parlia-
ment.

At the appointed day the great council, distinguished in our annals by the appellation of "the mad parliament," assembled at Oxford.

June 11.

The barons, to intimidate their opponents, were attended by their military tenants, and took an oath to stand faithfully by each other, and to treat as "a mortal enemy," every man who should abandon their cause. The committee of reform was appointed. Among the twelve selected by Henry were his nephew the son of Richard, two of his uterine brothers, and the great officers of state: the leaders of the faction were included in the twelve named by the barons. Every member was sworn to reform the state of the realm to the honour of God, the service of the king, and the benefit of the people; and to allow no consideration, "neither of gift

⁶⁹ Rym. i. 654, 655.

“nor promise, profit nor loss, love nor hatred, “nor fear,” to influence him in the discharge of his duty. Each twelve then selected two of their opponents : and to the four thus selected was intrusted the charge of appointing fifteen persons to form the council of state. Having obtained the royal permission they proceeded to make the choice with apparent impartiality : both parties furnished an equal number ; and at their head was placed Boniface the archbishop of Canterbury, who, if he were connected with the court from his relationship to the queen, was also known to lean to the popular faction, through his jealousy of the superior influence of the king’s brothers. In reality, however, these elections proved the declining influence of the crown : as, while the chiefs of the reformers were named, Henry’s principal friends, his nephew and his brothers, had been carefully excluded. In a short time the triumph of Leicester was complete. The justiciary, the chancellor, the treasurer, all the sheriffs, and the governors of the principal castles belonging to the king, twenty in number, were removed ; and their places were supplied by the chiefs of the reformers, or the most devoted of their adherents. The new justiciary took an oath to administer justice to all persons, according to the ordinances of the committee : the chancellor not to put the great seal to any writ which had not the approbation of the king and privy coun-

CHAP.
II.

June 22.

cil, nor to any grant without the consent of the great council, nor to any instrument whatever, which was not in conformity with the regulations of the committee: the governors of the castles, to keep them faithfully for the use of the king, and to restore them to him or his heirs and no others, on the receipt of an order from the council; and at the expiration of twelve years to surrender them loyally on the demand of the king.⁷⁰ Having thus secured to themselves the sovereign authority, and divested Henry of the power of resistance, the committee began the work of reform by ordaining: 1. that four knights should be chosen by the freeholders of each county to ascertain and lay before the parliament the trespasses, excesses, and injuries committed within the county under the royal administration: 2. that a new high sheriff should be annually appointed for each county by the votes of the freeholders: 3. that all sheriffs, and the treasurer, chancellor, and justiciary, should annually give in their accounts: 4. and that parliaments should meet thrice in the year, in the

⁷⁰ Annal. Burt. 407. 411. 413, 414, 415. Brady, ii. App. N^o. 190, 191, 192, 193, 194. The royal castles were those of Dover and the other cinque ports, Northampton, Corfe, Scarborough, Nottingham, Hereford, Exeter, Sarum, Hadleigh, Winchester, Porchester, Bridgenorth, Oxford, Sherburn, the tower of London, Bamborough, Newcastle on Tyne, Rochester, Gloucester, Horestan, and Devizes. Ibid. et Ann. Burt. 416. The reader will observe that Windsor, Wallingford, and a few others still remained in the king's possession.

beginning of the months of February, June, and October. They were, however, careful that these assemblies should consist entirely of their own partisans. Under the pretext of exonerating the other members from the trouble and expense of such frequent journeys, twelve persons were appointed as representatives of the commonalty, that is, the whole body of earls, barons, and tenants of the crown: and it was enacted that whatever these twelve should determine, in conjunction with the council of state, should be considered as the act of the whole body.⁷¹

These innovations did not, however, pass without opposition. Henry, the son of the king of the Romans, Aymar, Guy, and William, half brothers to the king, and the earl of Warenne, members of the committee, though they were unable to prevent, considerably retarded the measures of the reformers: and nourished in the friends of the monarch a spirit of resistance which might ultimately prove fatal to the projects of Leicester and his associates. It was resolved to silence them by intimidation. They

Banishment of the king's brothers.

⁷¹ Ann. Burt. 416. *Le commun elise xii. prodes homes ces sont les duze ke sont eslu par les Baruns a treter a treis parlemens per an.* p. 411. They add that it was *pur esparnier le cust del commun.* 416. The word parliament had now grown into common use. In a writ of the 23th of this king the conference between John and his barons at Runnymede is called a parliament. Cl. 23 Hen. III. m. 12. and in his 32d year occurs a writ with the expression *coram rege et toto parlamento.* Cl. 32 Hen. III. m. 13. Dors.

CHAP.
II.

were required to swear obedience to the ordinances of the majority of the members: proposals were made to resume all grants of the crown, from which the three brothers derived their support: and several charges of extortion and trespass were made in the king's courts not only against them, but also against the fourth brother Geoffry de Valence. Fearing for their liberty or lives they all retired secretly from Oxford, and fled to Wolvesham, a castle belonging to Aymar, as bishop elect of Winchester. They were pursued and surrounded by the barons: their offer to take the oath of submission was now refused: and of the conditions proposed to them the four brothers accepted as the most eligible, to leave the kingdom, taking with them six thousand marks, and trusting the remainder of their treasures, and the rents of their lands, to the honour of their antagonists.

July 8. Their departure broke the spirit of the dissidents. John de Warene, and prince Henry successively took the oath: even Edward, the king's eldest son, reluctantly followed their example, and was compelled to recall the grants which he had made to his uncles of revenues in Guienne, and to admit of four reformers as his council, for the administration of that dutchy.⁷² To secure their triumph a letter was written to the pope in

⁷² Annal. Burt. 410, 411. 419. Rymer, i. 660, 661, 662, 663. Annal. Winc. 310.

the name of the parliament, complaining of the king's brothers, soliciting the deposition of the bishop of Winchester, and requesting the aid of a legate to co-operate with them in the important task of reforming the state of the kingdom.⁷³

1259.
Jan. 23.

In a short time Leicester was alarmed by the approach of a dangerous visitor, Richard king of the Romans. That prince had squandered away an immense mass of treasure in Germany, and was returning to replenish his coffers by raising money on his English estates. At St. Omer, to his surprise, he received a prohibition to land before he had taken an oath to observe the provisions of reform, and not to bring the king's brothers in his suite. His pride deemed the message an insult: but his necessities required the prosecution of his journey: and he gave a reluctant promise to comply, as soon as he should receive the king's permission. At Canterbury Henry signified his commands, and Richard took the oath.⁷⁴

By the original agreement at Westminster the reformation of the state was to be settled before Christmas. But the faction was as slow

Articles of
reform.

⁷³ Annal. Burt. 418. 422. Rymer, i. 667. It appears to me that the commission of the twenty-four ended with the parliament of Oxford: but the chiefs had all been appointed to the privy council, to which the exercise of the sovereign authority had been reserved, except during the sessions of parliament: and even then they retained it, as the parliament was represented by twelve members, all their partisans. See Annal. Burt. p. 423. 431. 435.

⁷⁴ Rym. i. 672. Annal. Burt. 421.

CHAP.

II.

to conclude, as it had been eager to commence its labours. To satisfy the people, a proclamation was issued in the king's name, stating the importance of the undertaking, the time necessary to obtain an exact knowledge of the national grievances, and the folly of risking the acquisition of their object by the adoption of hasty and inconsiderate measures. The truth was, that the chiefs of the party were unwilling to divest themselves of the authority, which they had usurped. They distributed among their partisans all the lay offices and ecclesiastical benefices in the gift of the crown ; received the principal part of the royal revenue ; and shared among themselves the produce of the escheats, wardships, and marriages of the king's tenants.⁷⁵ But the ambitious views of Leicester soon began to alarm his associates : and a violent quarrel between him and the earl of Gloucester threatened to dissolve the confederacy. A false but apparent reconciliation was effected ; when a petition from the knights bachelors of England created a new alarm. They requested the council to hasten the reform, observing that it had been eighteen months in possession of the sovereign authority, and the nation had yet to learn what was the fruit of its labours. This was a remonstrance which it would have been dangerous to overlook ; and in the next parlia-

⁷⁵ West. 391.

CHAP.

II.

Oct. 13.

ment a project of reform was proposed, approved and ordered to be enforced by the judges in their circuits. Its principal objects were to secure the inferior tenants from the oppression of their lords, and to purify the administration of justice. The provisions under the first head refer to customs that are now obsolete, and would therefore prove uninteresting to the reader: the great remedy for all abuses under the second, was the appointment of commissioners to inspect the conduct of the judges. Two were ordered to watch all the proceedings in the king's bench: two others those in the exchequer; and one to attend the itinerant justices in their respective circuits. With the same view four knights were chosen in every county, with the power of admonishing, as they saw occasion, the sheriff of his duty, and of informing the justiciary, when the admonition was neglected. Contrary to the enactment of the last year the new sheriffs were appointed by the great officers of state: but the freeholders in each county were ordered to choose four persons against the following Michaelmas, and to present them to the barons of the exchequer, who would select one of the number for the next sheriff. Such were the principal articles of the reform so long and so anxiously desired: articles which disappointed the expectations of the nation, and created a general wish that the sovereign authority might be removed from the

CHAP.

II.

Quarrels
among the
barons.

hands of a few factious noblemen, and restored to him, to whom it constitutionally belonged.⁷⁶

Henry had now been for two years the mere shadow of a king. The acts of government, indeed, ran in his name : but the sovereign authority was exercised without control by the lords of the council : and obedience to the royal orders, when the king ventured to issue any orders, was severely punished as a crime against the safety of the state. But if he were a silent, he was not an inattentive, observer of the passing events. The discontent of the people did not escape his notice : and he saw with pleasure the intestine dissensions which daily undermined the power of the faction. The earls of Leicester and Gloucester pursued opposite interests, and formed two opposite parties. Leicester, unwilling to behold the ascendancy of his rival, retired into France ; and Gloucester discovered an inclination to be reconciled to his sovereign. But to balance this advantage, prince Edward, who had formerly displayed so much spirit in vindicating the rights of the crown, joined the earl of Leicester, their most dangerous enemy : and this unexpected connexion awakened in the king's mind the suspicion of a design to depose him, and place his son on the throne. In these dispositions of enmity, jealousy, and distrust, the barons assembled in London to meet

1260.
May 1.

⁷⁶ Annal. Burt, 428—433.

Henry in parliament. But each member was attended by a military guard : his lodgings were fortified to prevent a surprise : the apprehension of hostilities confined the citizens within their houses : and the concerns of trade with the usual intercourse of society were totally suspended. After many attempts, the good offices of the king of the Romans effected a specious but treacherous pacification ; and the different leaders left the parliament friends in open shew, but with the same sentiments of animosity rankling in their breasts, and the same projects for their own aggrandizement, and the depression of their opponents.⁷⁷

At length Henry persuaded himself that the time was arrived, when he might resume his authority. He unexpectedly entered the council, and in a tone of dignity reproached the members with their affected delays, and their breach of trust. They had been established to reform the state, improve the revenue, and discharge his debts : but they had neglected these objects, and had laboured only to enrich themselves, and to perpetuate their own power. He should, therefore, no longer consider them as his council, but employ such other remedies as he thought proper.⁷⁸ He immediately repaired to the Tower, which had lately been fortified ; seized on the treasure in the mint ; ordered the

Henry resumes the government.

1261.
Feb. 2.

⁷⁷ West. 373.

⁷⁸ West. 377.

CHAP.

II.

gates of London to be closed ; compelled all the citizens above twelve years of age to swear fealty in their respective wardnotes ; and by proclamation commanded the knights of the several counties to attend the next parliament in arms. The barons immediately assembled their retainers, and marched to the neighbourhood of the capital : but each party, diffident of its strength, betrayed an unwillingness to begin hostilities ; and it was unanimously agreed to postpone the discussion of their differences till the return of prince Edward, who was in France displaying his prowess at a tournament. He returned in haste, and to the astonishment of all who were not in the secret, embraced the interests of the barons.⁷⁹

Henry, however, persevered in his resolution. By repeated desertions the party of his enemies had been reduced to the two earls of Leicester and Gloucester, the grand justiciary, the bishop of Worcester, and Hugh de Montfort, whose principal dependance was on the oath which the king and the nation had taken to observe the provisions of Oxford. To this argument it was replied that the same authority which enacted the law, was competent to repeal it : and that an oath which should deprive the parliament of such right, was in its own nature unjust, and

⁷⁹ Wikes, 54. West, 378. Claus. 45 Hen. III. 19. Cit. Carte, 127.

consequently invalid.⁸⁰ For greater security, however, the king applied to pope Alexander, who, by a bull, released him from his oath, on the principle that the provisions of Oxford were injurious to the state, and therefore incompatible with the obligations of the coronation oath, which he had previously taken.⁸¹ This bull he published, appointed a new justiciary and chancellor, removed the officers of his household, revoked to himself the custody of the royal castles, named new sheriffs in the counties, and by proclamation announced that he had resumed the exercise of the royal authority. This was followed by another proclamation to refute the false reports circulated by the barons. The king requested the people to judge of him by his actions, not by the accusations of his enemies. He had now reigned five-and-forty years, and during that long period had secured to them the blessings of peace. They might contrast his administration with that of the barons.

CHAP.
II.

June.

July 8.

Aug. 5.

Was there one among them that could say he had ever received an injury from his sovereign? They knew that under him they had enjoyed their rights and possessions in peace. His conduct had proved that as he never intended, so he had never countenanced, injustice. If he had appointed new sheriffs and new governors of his castles, they were men whose loyalty he

⁸⁰ West. 391.⁸¹ Rym. 722, 723, 742, 746. Wikes, 55.

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II.

could trust, and on whose equity his subjects might rely. Should they, however, repeat the exactions of their predecessors, let the injured party appeal to him, and he should always be ready to do justice to the meanest of his subjects against the most powerful of their oppressors. The earls of Leicester and Gloucester, with the bishop of Worcester, had summoned three knights from every county south of the Trent, to meet them at St. Alban's: the king by his writs annulled the previous summons, and ordered the same knights to repair to him at Windsor, that they might be present at his intended conference with the barons, and convince themselves of the justice and utility of his demands.⁸² Several interviews between the parties took place at London. In the first the greater part of the barons appeared to consent to a plan of pacification offered by the king: in the second it was resolved to refer their differences to the decision of the king of France and the king of the Romans. The earl of Leicester, however, found means to prevent the execution of the agreement: and a third meeting was held, in which the barons abandoned the greater part of the provisions, and the king confirmed such as were evidently conducive to the welfare of the realm. Leicester was still dissatisfied, and returned to France, observing that he should

Dec. 6.

1262.
Feb. 2.

April.

May 2.

⁸² See the two writs in Brady, ii. App. N^o. 202, 203.

never trust the faith of a perjured king:⁸³ Henry by proclamation acquainted the nation that pope Urban had confirmed the absolution obtained from his predecessor; that he had resumed the exercise of the royal authority; and that he was determined to observe and enforce every article of the two charters, and to punish severely all persons, who should adhere to the confederacy of the barons.⁸⁴

CHAP.
II.

The king, finding himself at liberty, was induced to visit Louis of France; and Leicester embraced the opportunity to return to England, and re-organize the association which had so lately been dissolved. His hopes of success were founded on the pride and inexperience of prince Edward, who untaught by experience, had called around him a guard of foreigners, and intrusted to their leaders the custody of his castles. Such conduct not only awakened the jealousy of the barons, but alienated the affections of the royalists. Several of these, deprived of the honours to which they conceived themselves entitled, secretly applied to the earl, and brought with them a valuable auxiliary, Gilbert de Clare, the son and successor of the late earl of Gloucester.⁸⁵ The father by his moderation had frequently paralyzed the ambition of Montfort: but the son, a youth of twenty years of age, resigned himself entirely to the guidance of that

Loses it
again.

Oct. 3.

⁸³ Wikes, 55. West, 380, 381.
N^o. 205.

⁸⁵ West, 392.

⁸⁴ Apud Brady, ii. App.

CHAP.

II.

1263.

March 10.

nobleman, and placed at his disposal the powerful influence of the family of Clare. Henry, at his return, aware of the designs of his enemies, ordered the citizens of London, the inhabitants of the cinque ports, and the principal barons, to swear fealty not only to himself, but in the event of his death, to his eldest son the prince Edward. To the second oath the earl of Gloucester objected: he was immediately joined at Oxford by his associates; and in a few days the earl of

April 25.

Leicester appeared at their head. With the royal banner displayed before them, they took

June 4.

Gloucester, Worcester, and Bridgenorth: ravaged without mercy the lands of the royalists, the foreigners, and the natives who refused to join their ranks; and augmenting their numbers as they advanced, directed their march towards London. In London the aldermen and principal citizens were devoted to the king: the mayor and the populace openly declared for the barons. Henry was in possession of the tower: and Edward after taking by force one thousand marks out of the Temple, hastened to throw himself into the castle of Windsor, the most magnificent palace, if we may believe a contemporary, then existing in Europe. The queen attempted to follow her son by water; but the populace insulted her with the most opprobrious epithets, discharged volleys of filth into the royal barge, and prepared to sink it with large stones, as it should pass beneath the bridge. The mayor at length

July 14.

took her under his protection, and placed her in safety in the episcopal palace near St. Paul's.⁸⁶

The king of the Romans now appeared again on the scene in quality of mediator. The negotiation lasted three weeks: but Henry was compelled to yield to the increasing power of his adversaries; and it was agreed that the royal castles should once more be intrusted to the custody of the barons, the foreigners be again banished, and the provisions of Oxford be confirmed, subject to such alterations as should be deemed proper by a committee appointed for that purpose. Henry returned to his palace at Westminster; new officers of state were selected; and the king's concessions were notified to the conservators of the peace in the several counties.

There was one article in the treaty which proved favourable to the interests of Henry: that the assent of the parliament should be obtained. So many objections were raised, so many claims of indemnification were brought against the barons for the ravages committed by them in the late expedition, that two successive parliaments assembled, and yet no final arrangement could be made. But the time thus obtained was usefully employed to attach several of the associates to the royal cause. Some were

Sep. 9.

Oct. 14.

⁸⁶ Chron. Dumst. 356, 357. Rym. i. 762. 772. Wikes, 56, 57. Trivet, 212. Windesores, quo non erat ad id tempus splendidus infra fines Europe. West. 333.

CHAP.
II.

dissatisfied with the arrogance and ambition of Leicester, who proposed that the powers of the new commissioners should last during the lives of both Henry and Edward; and others were brought over by grants of lands, and by promises of rewards. The king found himself sufficiently strong to take the field. He was disappointed in an attempt to obtain possession of Dover: but nearly succeeded in surprising the earl of Leicester, who with a small body of forces had marched from Kenilworth to Southwark. Henry appeared on one side of the town, the prince on the other: and the royalists had previously closed the gates of the city. So imminent was the danger, that the earl, who had determined not to yield, advised his companions to assume the cross, and to prepare themselves for death by the offices of religion. But the opportunity was lost by a strict adherence to the custom of the times. A herald was sent to require him to surrender: and in the mean while the populace, acquainted with the danger of their favourite, burst open the gates, and introduced him into the city.⁸⁷

Award of
the king of
France.
Dec. 14.

The power of the two parties was now more equally balanced: and their mutual apprehensions inclined them to listen to the pacific exhortations of the bishops. It was agreed to refer

⁸⁷ Chron. Dunst. 353—360. Rym. i. 773. 775. Wikes, 57. West. 383, 384.

every subject of dispute to the arbitration of the king of France : an expedient which had been proposed the last year by Henry, but rejected by Leicester. Louis accepted the honourable office, and summoned the parties to appear before him at Amiens. The king attended in person : the earl, who was detained at home in consequence of a real or pretended fall from his horse, had sent his attorneys. Both parties solemnly swore to abide by the decision of the French monarch. Louis heard the allegations and arguments of each, consulted his court, and pronounced judgment in favour of Henry. He annulled the provisions of Oxford as destructive of the rights of the crown, and injurious to the interests of the nation : ordered the royal castles to be restored : gave to the king the authority to appoint all the officers of state and of his household, and to call to his council whomsoever he thought proper, whether native or foreigner ; reinstated him in the same condition in which he was before the meeting of the “ mad parliament ;” and ordered that all offences committed by either party should be buried in oblivion. This award was soon afterwards confirmed by the pope ; and the archbishop of Canterbury received an order to excommunicate all, who in violation of their oaths, should refuse to submit to it.⁸⁸

1264.
Jan. 23.

⁸⁸ Rymer, i. 776—778, 780—781.

CHAP.

II.

It is re-
jected by
Leicester.

Riots in
London.
March 31.

The barons had already taken their resolution. The moment the decision was announced to them, they declared that it was, on the face of it, contrary to truth and justice, and had been procured by the undue influence, which the queen of Louis, the sister-in-law to Henry, possessed over the mind of her husband.³⁹ Hostilities immediately recommenced: and, as every man of property was compelled to adhere to one of the two parties, the flames of civil war were lighted up in almost every part of the kingdom. In the north, and in Cornwall and Devon, the decided superiority of the royalists forced the friends of the barons to dissemble their real sentiments: the midland counties and the marches of Wales were pretty equally divided: but in the cinque ports, the metropolis, and the neighbouring districts, Montfort governed without opposition. His partisan, Thomas Fitz-Thomas, had been intruded into the office of mayor of London; and a convention for their mutual security had been signed by that officer and the commonalty of the city on the one part, and the earls of Leicester, Gloucester, and Derby, Hugh le Despenser the grand justiciary, and twelve barons on the other. In the different wardmotes every male inhabitant above twelve years of age was sworn a member of the association: a constable and marshal of the city were appointed: and orders were given

³⁹ Annal. Wigorn. 495. Dunst. 363.

that at the sound of the great bell at St. Paul's all should assemble in arms, and obey the authority of these officers. The efficacy of the new arrangements was immediately put to the test. Whether Leicester sought to involve the citizens beyond the probability of pardon, or to procure money for future measures, Despenser, the justiciary, came from the Tower, put himself at the head of the associated bands, and conducted them to destroy the two palaces of the king of the Romans at Isleworth and Westminster, and the houses of the nobility and citizens known or suspected to be attached to the royal cause. The justices of the king's bench, and the barons of the exchequer were thrown into prison: the monies belonging to foreign merchants and bankers, which for security had been deposited in the churches, were carried to the Tower: and the Jews, to the number of five hundred, men, women, and children, were conducted to a place of confinement. Out of these Despenser selected a few of the more wealthy, that he might enrich himself by their ransom: the rest he abandoned to the cruelty and rapacity of the populace, who after stripping them of their clothes, massacred them all in cold blood. Cock ben Abraham, who was considered the most opulent individual in the kingdom, had been killed in his own house by John Fitz-John, one of the barons. The murderer at first appropriated to himself the treasure of his victim: but afterwards thought

CHAP.
II.Henry is
successful.
April 4.

it more prudent to secure a moiety, by making a present of the remainder to Leicester.⁹⁰

Henry had summoned the tenants of the crown to meet him at Oxford; and being joined by Comyn, Bruce, and Baliol, the lords of the Scottish borders, unfurled his standard, and placed himself at the head of the army. His first attempts were successful. Northampton, Leicester, and Nottingham, three of the strongest fortresses in the possession of the barons, were successively reduced: and among the captives were reckoned Simon the eldest of Leicester's sons, fourteen other bannerets, forty knights, and a numerous body of esquires. From Nottingham he was recalled into Kent by the danger of his nephew, Henry, besieged in the castle of Rochester. At his approach the enemy, who had taken and pillaged the city, retired with precipitation: and the king, after an ineffectual attempt to secure the co-operation of the cinque ports, fixed his head-quarters in the town of Lewes.⁹¹

April 26.

But de-
feated at
Lewes.

May 12.

Leicester having added a body of fifteen thousand citizens to his army, marched from London,

⁹⁰ Wikes, 59, 60. West. 385. The earl of Gloucester also murdered the Jews in Canterbury: and the earl of Derby destroyed their houses at Worcester, and compelled them to receive baptism. As a justification it was pretended that they were attached to the king, had Greek-fire in their possession, kept false keys to the gates, and had made subterraneous passages from their houses leading under the walls. Dunst. 368. West. 385, 386. Triv. 214.

⁹¹ Dunst. 366, 369. West. 385. Wikes, 60, 61. Annal. Roffen, 51.

with a resolution to bring the controversy to an issue. From Fletching he dispatched a letter to Henry, protesting that neither he nor his associates had taken up arms against the king, but against the evil counsellors, who enjoyed and abused the confidence of their sovereign. Henry returned a public defiance, which was accompanied by a message from prince Edward and the king of the Romans, declaring in the name of the royal barons that the charge was false; pronouncing Montfort and his adherents perjured; and daring the earls of Leicester and Derby to appear in the king's court, and prove their assertion by single combat. After the observation of these forms, which the feudal connexion between the lord and the vassal was supposed to make necessary, Montfort prepared for battle. It was the peculiar talent of this leader to persuade his followers, that the cause in which they fought, was the cause of heaven. He represented to them that their objects were liberty and justice: and that their opponent was a prince, whose repeated violation of the most solemn oaths had released them from their allegiance, and had entailed on his head the curse of the Almighty. He ordered each man to fasten a white cross on the breast and the shoulder; and to devote the next evening to the duties of religion. Early in the morning he marched forward: and leaving his baggage and standard on the summit of a hill, about two miles from Lewes, descended

May 13.

CHAP. II. into the plain. Henry's foragers had discovered
 and announced his approach: and the royalists
 in three divisions silently awaited the attack.
 May 14. Leicester, having called before the ranks the earl
 of Gloucester and several other young noblemen,
 bade them kneel down, and conferred on them
 the order of knighthood: and the Londoners,
 who impatiently expected the conclusion of the
 ceremony, rushed with loud shouts on the ene-
 my.⁹² They were received by prince Edward,
 broken in a few minutes, and driven back as far
 as the standard. Had the prince returned from
 the pursuit, and fallen on the rear of the confe-
 derates, the victory might have been secured.
 But he remembered the insults which the citi-
 zens had offered to his mother, and the excesses
 of which they had lately been guilty: the sug-
 gestions of prudence were less powerful than the
 thirst of revenge: and the pursuit of the fugi-
 tives carried him with the flower of the army
 four miles from the field of battle. More than
 three thousand Londoners were slain; but the
 advantage was dearly purchased, by the loss of
 the victory and the ruin of the royal cause.
 Leicester, who watched with pleasure the impe-
 tuosity of the prince, fell with the remainder of
 his forces on Henry and his brother. A body of
 Scots, who fought on foot, was cut to pieces.

§ ⁹² It appears that the standard of the king was a dragon, the same
 as had been the standard of the West-Saxon princes. Dunst. 366.
 West. 387.

Their leaders, John Comyn and Robert de Bruce, were made prisoners: the same fate befel the king of the Romans: and the combat was feebly maintained by the exertions and example of Philip Basset, who fought near the person of Henry. But when that nobleman sank through loss of blood, his retainers fled; the king, whose horse had been killed under him, surrendered: and Leicester conducted the royal captive into the priory. The fugitives, as soon as they learned the fate of their sovereign, came back to share his captivity, and voluntarily yielded themselves to their enemies.⁹³

When Edward turned from the pursuit, both armies had disappeared. He traversed the field, which was strewed with the bodies of the slain and the wounded, anxiously, but fruitlessly, inquiring after his father. As he approached Lewes, the barons came out, and on the first shock, the earl Warenne, with the king's uterine brothers and seven hundred horse, fled to Pevensey, whence they sailed to the continent. Edward, with a strong body of veterans from the Welsh marches, rode along the wall to the castle, and understanding that his father was a captive in the priory, obtained permission to visit him from Leicester. An unsuccessful attempt made by the barons against the castle revived his hopes: he opened a negotiation with

Misc of
Lewes.

⁹³ Dunst. 370. 372. West. 397, 399. Wikes, 62. Paris, 853, 851.

CHAP.

II.

May 15.

the chiefs of the party: and the next morning was concluded the treaty known by the name of “the mise of Lewes.” By this it was agreed that all prisoners taken during the war should be set at liberty: that the princes Edward and Henry should be kept as hostages for the peaceable conduct of their fathers, the king of England and the king of the Romans; and that all matters which could not be amicably adjusted in the next parliament, should be referred to the decision of certain arbitrators. In the battle of Lewes about five thousand men are said to have fallen on each side.⁹⁴

Leices-
ter's admi-
nistration.

By this victory the royal authority was laid prostrate at the feet of Leicester. The scheme of arbitration was merely a blind to deceive the vulgar: his past conduct had proved how little he was to be bound by such decisions; and the referees themselves, aware of the probable result, refused to accept the office. The great object of his policy was the preservation of the

⁹⁴ West. 388. Dunst. 372. Wikes, 63. In a letter which has been preserved by Westminster, and which appears to be written by a well-informed contemporary, a different account is given of the conclusion of the battle. Henry is said not to have surrendered, but to have retired into the priory, where he was joined by Edward; and after much opposition consented to the treaty to save the lives of the king of the Romans and the noble captives, whom Leicester threatened to put to death. He adds that the arbitrators were to be two Frenchmen, chosen by six other French prelates and noblemen, and were to add to their number one Englishman, that a majority might be ensured in case of diversity of opinion. West. 393.

ascendency, which he had acquired. To Henry, who was now the convenient tool of his ambition, he paid every exterior demonstration of respect: but never suffered him to depart out of his custody; and without consulting him affixed his seal to every order, which was issued for the degradation of the royal authority.⁹⁵ The king of the Romans, a more resolute and dangerous enemy, instead of being restored to liberty, was closely confined in the castle of Wallingford, and afterwards in that of Kenilworth: and the two princes were confined to the custody of the new governor of Dover, with instructions to allow of no indulgence, which might facilitate their escape. Instead of removing the sheriffs, a creature of Leicester was sent to each county with the title of conservator of the peace. This officer was empowered to arrest all persons who should carry arms without the king's special licence; to prevent all breaches of the peace; to employ the posse comitatus to apprehend offenders; and to cause four knights to be chosen as the representatives of the county in the next parliament. In that assembly a new form of government was established, to last, unless it were dissolved by mutual consent, till the compromise of Lewes had been carried into full execution, not only in the reign of Henry, but also of

June 4.

June 23.

⁹⁵ Contra voluntatem nostram literas sigillo nostro, quo non nos, sed comes ipse utebatur pro suo arbitrio, formari fecit. Apud Brady, ii. 653.

CHAP.
II.

Edward, the heir apparent. This form had been devised by the heads of the faction to conceal their real views from the people ; and was so contrived that they retained in their own hands the sovereign authority, while to the superficial observer they seemed to have resigned it to the king and his council. It was enacted that Henry should delegate the power of choosing his counsellors to a committee of three persons, whose proceedings should be valid, provided they were attested by the signatures of two of the number. The king immediately issued a writ to the earl of Leicester, the earl of Gloucester, and the bishop of Exeter, authorizing them to appoint in his name a council of nine members : nor were they slow in selecting for that purpose the most devoted of their adherents. The powers given to this council were most extensive, and to be exercised without control whenever the parliament was not sitting. Besides the usual authority it possessed the appointment of all the officers of state, of all the officers of the household, and of all the governors of the royal castles. Three were ordered to be in constant attendance on the king's person : all were to be summoned on matters of great importance : and a majority of two thirds was required to give a sanction to their decisions. Hitherto the original committee seemed to have been forgotten : but it was contrived, that when the council was so divided that the consent of two thirds could not be obtained,

CHAP.
II.

the question should be reserved for the determination of the three electors: an artifice by which, under the modest pretence of providing against dissension, they invested themselves with the sovereign authority. By additional enactments it was provided that no foreigner, though he might go, or come, or reside peaceably, should be employed under the government: that past offences should be mutually forgiven; and that the two charters, the provisions made the last year, in consequence of the statutes of Oxford, and all the ancient and laudable customs of the realm, should be inviolably observed.⁹⁶

The earl was now in reality possessed of more extensive authority than Henry had ever enjoyed: but he soon discovered that to retain the object of his ambition would require the exertion of all his powers. The cause of the captive monarch was ardently espoused by foreign nations, and by the sovereign pontiff. Adventurers from every province of France crowded to the royal standard which queen Eleanor had erected at Damme in Flanders: and a numerous fleet assembled in the harbour to transport to England the thousands, who had sworn to humble the pride of a disloyal and aspiring subject. To oppose them, Leicester had summoned to the camp on Barnham downs, not only the king's

The
queen's
army dis-
persed.

Aug. 3.

⁹⁶ Rym. i. 791—795. Brady, ii. App. N^o. 213, 214.

CHAP.
II.

military tenants, but the whole force of the nation ; ⁹⁷ and taking on himself the command of the fleet, cruised in the narrow seas to intercept the invaders. But the winds seemed to be leagued with the earl: the queen's army was detained for several weeks in the vicinity of Damme: and the mercenaries gradually disbanded themselves, when the short period for which they had contracted to serve, was expired. At the same time the pontiff had commissioned Guido, cardinal bishop of Sabina, to proceed to England, and take Henry under the papal protection: but the hint of a conspiracy against his life deterred him from crossing the sea, and he was content to summon four of the English prelates to appear before him at Boulogne. After much tergiversation they obeyed: but appealed from his jurisdiction to the equity of the pope, or a general council: and though they consented to bring back a sentence of excommunication against the king's enemies, they willingly suffered it to be taken from them by

Aug. 12.

Oct. 12.

⁹⁷ The military tenants were ordered under the penalty of felony to bring into the field not only the force specified by their tenures, but all the horsemen and infantry in their power: every township was compelled to send eight, six, or four footmen well armed with lances, bows and arrows, swords, cross bows, and hatchets, who should serve forty days at the expense of the township: and the cities and burghs received orders to furnish as many horsemen and footmen as the sheriff might appoint. No excuse was to be allowed on account of the shortness of the time, the approach of the harvest, or any other private inconvenience. See this extraordinary summons in Brady, ii. App. N^o. 217.

the officers at Dover. Their appeal was approved by the convocation of the clergy, and Guido, after publishing the excommunication himself at Hesdin, returned to Rome, where he was elevated to the chair of St. Peter by the name of Clement IV.⁹⁸

CHAP.

II.

Oct. 23.

Oct. 30.

During the summer Leicester had been harassed with repeated solicitations for the release of the two princes, Edward and Henry. In the winter he pretended to acquiesce, and convoked a parliament to meet after Christmas, for the avowed purpose of giving the sanction of the legislature to so important a measure. But the extraordinary manner in which this assembly was constituted, provoked a suspicion that his real object was to consolidate and perpetuate his own power. Only those prelates and barons were summoned, who were known to be attached to his party: and the deficiency was supplied by representatives from the counties, cities, and boroughs,⁹⁹ who, as they had been chosen through his influence, proved the obsequious ministers of his will. Several weeks were consumed in private negotiation with Henry and his son. Leicester was aware of the untameable spirit of Edward: nor would he consent that the prince should exchange his confinement for the company of his father, on any other terms, than that he should still remain under the inspection

Pretended
liberation
of Ed-
ward.

⁹⁸ Dunst. 373, 374. Rym. i. 793—800. West. 333, 389. 394. Wikes, 63. 65.

⁹⁹ Rym. i. 803, 804.

CHAP.

II.

1265.
March 13.

of his keepers, and evince his gratitude for the indulgence by ceding to the earl and his heirs the county of Chester, the castle of Pee, and the town of Newcastle under Lyne, in exchange for which he should receive other lands of the same annual value. At length the terms were settled, and confirmed by the parliament, with every additional security, which the jealousy of the faction could devise. It was enacted that the charters and the ordinances should be inviolably observed: that neither the king nor the prince should aggrieve the earl or his associates for their past conduct: that if they did, their vassals and subjects should be released from the obligation of fealty till full redress were obtained, and their abettors should be punished with exile and forfeiture: that the barons, whom the king had defied before the battle of Lewes, should renew their homage and fealty, but on the express condition that such homage and fealty should be no longer binding, if he violated his promise: that the command of the royal castles should be taken from suspected persons, and intrusted to officers of approved loyalty: that the prince should not leave the realm for three years under pain of disherison: that he should not choose his advisers and companions himself, but receive them from the council of state: that with his father's consent he should put into the hands of the barons for five years, five royal castles, as securities for his behaviour; and should deliver

to Leicester the town and castle of Bristol in pledge, till a full and legal transfer should be made of Chester, Pex, and Newcastle : that both Henry and Edward should swear to observe all these articles, not to solicit any absolution from their oath, and to make no use of such absolution, if it were to be pronounced by the pope : and lastly that they should cause the present agreement, “ to be confirmed in the best manner that might be devised, in Ireland, Gascony, Scotland, and all lands subject to the king of England.”¹⁰⁰ These were terms which nothing but necessity could have extorted : and to add to their stability, they were for the most part embodied in the form of a writ, signed by the king, and sent to the sheriffs, with orders to publish them in the full court of each county twice every year.

It is generally supposed that the project of summoning to parliament the representatives of the counties, cities, and boroughs, grew out of that system of policy which the earl had long pursued, of flattering the prejudices, and attaching to himself the affections, of the people. Nor had his efforts proved unsuccessful. Men in the higher ranks of life might penetrate behind the veil, with which he sought to conceal

The
marchers
subdued.

¹⁰⁰ Par Ireland, par Gascoigne, par le Roi de Eschoce, e par totes les terres sūgeites au Roi de Engleterre. Brad. i. App. 34. This curious passage shews that the parliament at this period considered Scotland as a fief of the English crown.

CHAP.

II.

his ambition : but by the nation at large he was considered as the reformer of abuses, the protector of the oppressed, and the saviour of his country. Even some of the clergy, and several religious bodies, soured by papal and regal exactions, gave him credit for the truth of his pretensions, and preachers were found, who, though he had been excommunicated by the legate, made his virtues the theme of their sermons, and exhorted their hearers to stand by the patron of the poor, and the avenger of the church.¹⁰¹ Within the kingdom no man dared to dispute his authority : it was only at the extremities that a faint shew of resistance was maintained. The distant disobedience of a few chiefs on the Scottish borders he despised or dissembled : and the open hostilities of the lords in the Welsh marches were crushed in their birth by his promptitude and decision. He compelled Roger de Mortimer and his associates to throw down their arms, surrender their castles, and abide the judgment of their peers, by whom they were condemned to expatriate themselves, some for twelve months, others for three years, and to reside during their exile in Ireland. They

1265.
Jan. 15.

¹⁰¹ Rym. i. 823. West. 395. It is amusing to compare the opposite writers of this period. Wikes, and the letter-writer in Westminster (392—395) are royalists, and severely censure the ambition and treason of Leicester : but in the estimation of the chroniclers of Dunstaple (363), and of Waverley (220), he lived a saint and died a martyr.

pretended to submit, but lingered on the sea-coast, and amid the mountains of Wales, in the hope that some new event might recall them to draw the sword, and fight again in the cause of their sovereign.¹⁰²

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II.

It had cost Leicester some years and much labour to climb to the summit of his greatness: his descent was rapid beyond the calculation of the most sanguine among his enemies. He had hitherto enjoyed the co-operation of the powerful earls of Derby and Gloucester: but, if *he* was too ambitious to admit of an equal, *they* were too proud to bow to a fellow-subject: frequent altercations betrayed their secret jealousies: and the sudden arrest and imprisonment of Derby on a charge of corresponding with the royalists, warned Gloucester of his own danger. He would have shared the captivity of his friend, had he assisted at the great tournament at Northampton: by his absence he disconcerted the plans of his enemy, and, recalling Mortimer and the exiles, unfurled the royal standard in the midst of his tenantry. Leicester immediately hastened to Hereford with the king, the prince, and a numerous body of knights. To prevent the effusion of blood their common friends intervened: a reconciliation was effected: and four umpires undertook the task of reconciling their differences. But under this appearance of

Defection
of Glo-
cester.

April 19.

April 25.

¹⁰² Wikes, 65. West, 394.

CHAP. II. friendship all was hollow and insincere. Leicester sought to circumvent his adversary: Gloucester waited the result of a plan for the liberation of Edward, which had been concerted through the means of Thomas de Clare, brother to the earl, and companion to the prince.¹⁰³

Escape of
the prince.
May 28.

One day after dinner Edward obtained permission to take the air without the walls of Hereford attended by his keepers. They rode to Widmarsh. A proposal was made to try the speed of their horses: several matches were made and run: and the afternoon was passed in a succession of amusements. A little before sunset there appeared on Tulington hill a person riding a grey charger, and waving his bonnet. The prince, who knew the signal, bidding adieu to the company, instantly galloped off with his friend, another knight, and four esquires. The keepers followed: but in a short time Mortimer with a band of armed men issued from a wood, received Edward with acclamations of joy, and conducted him to his castle of Wigmore. The next day the prince met the earl of Gloucester at Ludlow. They mutually pledged themselves to forget all former injuries, and to unite their efforts for the liberation of the king, on condition that he should govern according to the

¹⁰³ Wikes, 66. West. 394. Of the solicitude with which Edward had been guarded, a curious instance is mentioned by the monk of Melrose, 240.

laws, and should exclude foreigners from his councils.¹⁰⁴

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II.

Leicester
driven into
Wales.

When Leicester received the news of Edward's escape, he conceived that the prince was gone to join the earl Warenne, and William de Valence, who a few days before had landed with one hundred and twenty knights on the coast of Pembrokeshire. Ignorant, however, of his real motions, he dared not pursue him; but issued writs in the king's name, ordering the military tenants of the crown to assemble at first in Worcester, and afterwards in Gloucester. To these he added circular letters to the bishops, accusing Edward of rebellion, and requesting a sentence of excommunication against all disturbers of the peace "from the highest to the lowest."¹⁰⁵ The royalists had wisely determined to cut off his communication with the rest of the kingdom by securing to themselves the command of the Severn. Worcester readily opened its gates: Gloucester was taken by storm: and the castle after a siege of two weeks was surrendered on condition that the garrison should not serve again during the next forty days. Every bridge was now broken down: the small craft on the river was sunk or destroyed; and the fords were either deepened or watched by powerful detachments. Leicester, caught as it were in the toils, remained inactive at Hereford: but he awaited

May 30.

June 7.

¹⁰⁴ Rym. i. 311. Wikes, 67. West. 395. Mailros, 230.

¹⁰⁵ Rym. i. 311—313.

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II.

June 22.

the arrival of the troops he had summoned, and concluded with Llewellyn of Wales a treaty of alliance, by which, for the pretended payment of thirty thousand marks, Henry was made to resign all the advantages which he and his predecessors had wrested from the princes of that country. At last, reinforced by a party of Welshmen, the earl marched to the south, took and destroyed the castle of Monmouth, and fixed his head quarters at Newport. Here he expected a fleet of transports to convey him to Bristol: but the galleys of the earl of Gloucester blockaded the mouth of the Avon; and Edward with the bravest of his knights made an attempt on the town of Newport itself. The part which lay on the left bank of the Usk, was carried: but the destruction of the bridge arrested the progress of the victors, and Leicester with his dispirited followers escaped into Wales.¹⁰⁶

His son
defeated.

Misfortune now pressed on misfortune; and the last anchor of his hope was broken by the defeat of his son Simon of Montfort. That young nobleman was employed in the siege of Pevensey, on the coast of Sussex, when he received the king's writ to repair to Worcester.

July 12.

On his march he sacked the city of Winchester, the gates of which had been shut against him, passed peaceably through Oxford, and reached the castle of Kenilworth, the principal residence

¹⁰⁶ Rym. i. 814. Wikes, 68. Waver. 218, 219.

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II.

of his family. Here he remained for some days in heedless security, awaiting the orders of his father. Margot, a woman who in male attire performed the office of a spy, informed the prince, that Simon lay in the priory, and his followers in the neighbouring farm houses. Edward immediately formed the design of surprising them in their beds; and marching from Worcester in the evening arrived at Kenilworth about sunrise the next morning. Twelve bannerets with all their followers were made prisoners: and their horses and treasures repaid the industry of the captors. Simon alone with his pages escaped naked into the castle.¹⁰⁷

Aug. 1.

Leicester on the same day had crossed the Severn by a ford, and halted at Kempsey, about three miles from Worcester. Happy to find himself at last on the left bank of the river, and ignorant of the fate of his son and the motions of the enemy, he proceeded to Evesham, with the intention of continuing his march the next morning for Kenilworth. The prince had returned with his prisoners to Worcester: but left the city in the evening; and, to mask his

He is killed at the battle of Evesham.

¹⁰⁷ Wikes, 69, 70. Waver. 219. The Scotch monk of Melrose gives a singular reason, why Simon and his knights slept out of the castle. It was for the sake of bathing as soon as they rose in the morning, which made them more alert in battle. Mail. 230. His description of their surprise and flight is amusing. *Cerneres ibi quosdam omnino nudos fugere, nonnullos braccas tantum habentes super se, quosdam vero camisas et femoralia tantum. Multi tamen tulerunt pannos suos inter ulnas.* 231.

CHAP.
II.
}

Aug 1.

real design, took the road which leads to Bridgenorth. He passed the river near Clains, and wheeling to the right, arrived before sunrise in the neighbourhood of Evesham. He took his station on the summit of a hill in the direction of Kenilworth: two other divisions under the earl of Gloucester, and Roger de Mortimer, occupied the remaining roads. As the royalists bore the banners of their captives, they were taken by the enemy for the army of Simon de Montfort. But the mistake was soon discovered: Leicester from an eminence surveyed their numbers and disposition; and was heard to exclaim: "The Lord have mercy on our souls, for our bodies are prince Edward's." According to his custom he spent some time in prayer, and received the sacrament. His first object was to force his way through the division on the hill. Foiled in this attempt, and in danger of being surrounded, he ordered his men to form in a circle, and oppose on all sides the pressure of the enemy. For a while the courage of despair proved a match for the superiority of numbers. The old king, who had been compelled to appear in the ranks, was slightly wounded: and, as he fell from his horse, would probably have been killed, had he not cried out to his antagonist, "Hold, fellow, I am Harry of Winchester." The prince knew the voice of his father, sprung to his rescue, and conducted him to a place of safety. During his absence Leicester's horse

was killed under him : and, as he fought on foot, he asked, "if they gave quarter." A voice replied, "There is no quarter for traitors." Henry de Montfort, his eldest son, who would not leave his side, fell at his feet. His dead body was soon covered by that of the father. The royalists obtained a complete but sanguinary victory. Of Leicester's partisans all the barons and knights were slain with the exception of about ten, who were afterwards found breathing, and were cured of their wounds. The foot soldiers of the royal army, so we are told to save the honour of the leaders, offered to the body of the earl every indignity. His mangled remains were afterwards collected by the king's orders, and buried in the church of the abbey.¹⁰⁸

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II.

By this victory the sceptre was replaced in the hands of Henry. With the head, the hopes of the barons had been extinguished : they spontaneously set at liberty the prisoners who had been detained since the battle of Lewes, and anxiously awaited the determination of the parliament which had been summoned to meet at Winchester. In that assembly it was enacted, that all grants and patents issued under the king's seal during the time of his captivity,

Henry re-
stored.

Sep. 8.

¹⁰⁸ Waver. 219, 220. Duns. 384. West. 395. Rishanger, cont. Paris, 85.5. Mailros, 231, 232. This annalist is more enthusiastic in his praise of Leicester than any of our national historians. He employs seven pages in proving his sanctity by a number of ridiculous miracles. With him even Despensers is a martyr of justice. 232—239.

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 II.
 Sep. 16.

should be revoked: that the citizens of London for their obstinacy and excesses should forfeit their charter; that the countess of Leicester and her family should quit the kingdom; and that the estates of all, who had adhered to the late earl, should be confiscated. The rigour of

Nov. 6.

the last article was afterwards softened by a declaration, in which the king granted a free pardon to those who could shew that their conduct had not been voluntary, but the effect of compulsion.¹⁰⁹ These measures, however, were not calculated to restore the public tranquillity.

The sufferers, prompted by revenge, or compelled by want, had again recourse to the sword: the mountains, forests, and morasses, furnished them with places of retreat: and the flames of predatory warfare were kindled in most parts of the kingdom. To reduce these partial but successive insurrections occupied prince Edward the better part of two years. He first compelled Simon de Montfort and his associates, who had sought an asylum in the isle of Axholm, to submit to the award which should be given by himself and the king of the Romans. He next

Dec. 27.

led his forces against the men of the cinque ports, who had long been distinguished by their attachment to Leicester, and who since his fall had by their piracies interrupted the commerce of the narrow seas, and made prizes of all ships belonging to the king's subjects. The capture

¹⁰⁹ Claus. 50 Hen. III. m. 10. d. apud Brady, ii. 654. *

of Winchelsea, which was carried by storm, taught them to respect the authority of the sovereign: and their power by sea made the prince desirous to recall them to their duty and attach them to the crown. They swore fealty to Henry: and in return obtained a full pardon, and the confirmation of their privileges. From the cinque ports Edward proceeded to Hampshire, which with Berkshire and Surrey was ravaged by numerous banditti, under the command of Adam Gordon, the most athletic man of the age. They were surprised in a wood near Alton. The prince engaged in single combat with their leader, wounded and unhorsed him; and then, in reward of his valour, granted him his pardon.¹¹⁰ Still the garrison of Kenilworth continued to brave the royal power, and even added contumely to their disobedience. Having in one of their excursions taken a king's messenger, they cut off one of his hands, and sent him back with an insolent message to Henry. To subdue these obstinate rebels it was necessary to summon the chivalry of the kingdom; but the strength of the place defied all the efforts of the assailants: and the obstinacy of Hastings the governor, refused for six months every offer, which was made to him in the name of his sovereign.¹¹¹

1267.
May 6.

July.

¹¹⁰ West. 396. Dunst. 385. 387. Wikes, 221, 222.¹¹¹ Paris, 357. Klaus, 50 Hen. III. m. 5. Brad. ii. 656.

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II.

Mitigation
of the
punish-
ment of
the rebels.

Oct. 31.

There were many, even among the royalists, who disapproved of the indiscriminate severity exercised by the parliament at Winchester: and a possibility was suggested of granting indulgence to the sufferers, and at the same time satisfying those who had profited by their forfeitures. With this view a committee was appointed of twelve prelates and barons, whose award was confirmed by the king in parliament, and called the *dictum de Kenilworth*. They divided the delinquents into three classes. In the first were the earl of Derby, Hugh de Hastings, who had earned this pre-eminence by his superior ferocity, and the persons who had so insolently mutilated the king's messenger: the second comprised all who on different occasions had drawn the sword against their sovereign: in the third were numbered those, who though they had not fought under the banner, had accepted offices under the authority of Leicester. To all was given the option of redeeming their estates by the payment to the actual possessors of certain sums of money, to the amount of seven years' value by delinquents of the first class, of five by those of the second, and of two years or one year by those of the third.¹¹² By

¹¹² West. 393. Wikes, 223. Dunst. 391, 392. Provisions were made for the sale of parts of the estates in order to raise the money. Men who had no estates, were to pay one half of their goods and chattels, and find security for their future behaviour. Those

many the boon was accepted with gratitude: it was scornfully refused by the garrison of the castle of Kenilworth, and by the outlaws who had fled to the isle of Ely. The obstinacy of the former was subdued by famine: and they obtained from the clemency of the king the grant of their lives, limbs, and apparel. The latter, relying on the strength of their asylum, gloried in their rebellion, and occasionally ravaged the neighbouring country. Their impunity was, however, owing to the perfidy of the earl of Gloucester, who, without the talents, aspired to the fame and pre-eminence, of his deceased rival. He expressed his disapprobation of the award: the factious inhabitants of London chose him for their leader; and his presumption was nourished by the daily accession of outlaws from different parts of the country. Henry summoned his friends to the siege of the capital: and the earl, when he beheld from the walls the royal army, and reflected on the consequences of a defeat, condemned his own temerity, accepted the mediation of the king of the Romans, and on the condition of receiving a full pardon, gladly returned to his duty. His submission drew after it the submission of the other insurgents. If Llewellyn remained in

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II.

Dec. 9.

1267.
Apr. 9.

June 15.

July 25.

who had neither lands nor goods, were to swear that they would preserve the peace, find sureties, and stand to the judgment of the church. See the dictum itself in the Statutes at Large, London, 1736, vol. x. App. p. i.

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II.

Sep. 25.

Nov. 13.

arms, it was only with the hope of extorting more favourable terms. The title of prince of Wales with a right to the homage of the Welsh chieftains satisfied his ambition : and he consented to swear fealty to Henry, and to pay him the sum of twenty-five thousand marks.¹¹³ The restoration of tranquillity allowed the king to direct his attention to the improvement of his people. He condescended to profit by the labours of his adversaries : and some of the most useful among the provisions of the barons were with other laws enacted by legitimate authority in a parliament at Marlborough. To crown this important work, and to extinguish, if it were possible, the very embers of discontent, the clergy were brought forward with a grant of the twentieth of their revenues, as a fund which might enable those, who had been prevented by poverty, to redeem their estates according to the decision of the arbitrators at Kenilworth. The outlaws in the isle of Ely were also reduced. The king's poverty had disabled him from undertaking offensive measures against them : but a grant of the tenth part of the church revenues for three years, which he had obtained from the pope, infused new vigour into his councils : bridges were thrown over the rivers ; roads were constructed across the marshes ; and

¹¹³ Dunst. 393. West. 398, 399. Rym. i. 841. 844. 849. Waver. 224. Wikes, 33, 84. Heming. 588. Annal. Norwic. 398.

the rebels returned to their obedience on condition that they should enjoy the benefit of the dictum of Kenilworth, which they had so contemptuously and obstinately refused.¹¹⁴

The reader has seen Guido the bishop of Sabina, at Boulogne, and has witnessed the decided part, which he took in the contest between the king and the barons. His attachment to the royal cause was not weakened by his elevation to the papacy. From the chair of St. Peter he anxiously watched the course of events in the island; dispatched the cardinal Ottoboni to take advantage of every favourable circumstance; forbade the payment of the tenth which the clergy had been induced to grant to Leicester; congratulated the prince on his escape; and repeatedly exhorted the barons to rescue their sovereign from the control of an ambitious subject. The news of the victory of Evesham filled him with joy. He instantly wrote to the king and the prince to express his gratitude to the Almighty for so propitious an event: but at the same time earnestly exhorted them to use with moderation the licence of victory; to temper justice with mercy; to recollect that revenge was unworthy of a christian, and that clemency was the firmest pillar of a throne.¹¹⁵ When the legate arrived,

Conduct
of the
pope and
the legate.

¹¹⁴ Paris, 856. Wikes, 82. 86. Duns. 397.

¹¹⁵ Rym. i. 817—829.

CHAP.
II.

he repeated the instructions of the pontiff, disapproved of the harsh measures adopted by the parliament at Winchester, and by diffusing a spirit of moderation, greatly contributed to the restoration of tranquillity. From temporal, Ottoboni turned his attention to ecclesiastical matters: and among the canons which he published in a council at London, many of those which regard commendams, residence, dilapidations, repairs, and the plurality of benefices, still retain the force of law in the ecclesiastical courts.¹¹⁶ Before his departure, he recommended the interests of the oriental christians to a numerous concourse of people at Northampton, and gave the cross to the princes Edward and Edmund, to Henry the king's nephew, to twenty-two bannerets, and to more than one hundred knights.¹¹⁷

1268.
Apr. 25.
June 25.

Edward's
journey to
the holy
land.

It must appear extraordinary that the heir apparent and principal support of the crown, should select the present moment for an expedition to Palestine. If the country was at peace, yet the wounds inflicted by the civil war were

¹¹⁶ Wikes, 85. Otho, his predecessor, had vainly attempted to abolish the abuse, which was so prevalent in England, of bestowing a number of benefices on the same individual. On the present occasion some of the prelates appealed from the legate to the pope, but were induced the next morning to withdraw their appeal. *Ibid.* Indeed it would not have succeeded. So inexorable was Clement on that subject, that as soon as he learned that his nephew possessed three benefices, he compelled him to resign two. *Spoud.* 222.

¹¹⁷ Wikes, *Ibid.*

hardly closed; and the king was rapidly advancing in age, with a mind evidently unequal to the cares of his station. But considerations of individual interest were absorbed in a generous enthusiasm for what was considered the common cause of all christendom. Of the original kingdom of Jerusalem very little remained: to that little, however, the christians clung with the most devoted attachment: and the loss of any fragment of it was sufficient to diffuse a deep sense of sorrow throughout Europe, and to array army after army in the hopeless task of preserving the remainder. Antioch had lately fallen: at the news the king of France, though his last expedition had cost him his liberty, and almost his life, resumed the cross; and Edward immediately resolved to share with that accomplished monarch the danger and the merit of the new crusade. To providence he ascribed the recent deliverance of himself and his father from the control of their enemies: gratitude demanded that he should contribute to rescue the sepulchre of Christ from the pollution of the infidels. Perhaps, however, there was as much of policy as of devotion in his conduct. The crusade would open an honourable field for the exertions of turbulent and adventurous spirits, who might there employ against the Saracens those arms, which at home they might be induced to turn against their own sovereign: and he had expressly stipulated, and the stipu-

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II.

1270.
May 27.

July 16.

Nov. 10.

lation was confirmed by oaths and pledges, that the earl of Gloucester, the man whom he feared the most, should either accompany or follow him to Palestine. Having resolved to take with him his wife Eleanor, daughter to Alphonso king of Castile, he appointed a guardian for his children, and governors for his castles, and committed the care of the succession, and the administration of the kingdom, in the event of Henry's death, to his uncle the king of the Romans, and after him to Henry d'Almaigne, the son of that monarch.¹¹⁸ His departure was wisely distinguished by acts of popularity, the grant of a new charter with the restoration of their liberties to the citizens of London, and a pardon for the earl of Derby, whose repeated treasons had deserved the utmost severity of punishment. But while the prince was thus employed, the christian army had crossed the Mediterranean, and was mouldering away with disease on the sultry coast of Mauritania. The easy Louis had been induced by his brother Charles to direct his arms in the first instance against the bey of Tunis, who had refused to the new king the tribute which he had paid to the former possessors of Sicily. When Edward arrived, he found the camp plunged in the deepest affliction. The African prince had indeed submitted: but Louis was dead of a dysentery:

¹¹⁸ Rym. i. 861—864. Wikes, 90, 91.

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II.

Philip, his son and successor, was anxious to take possession of his kingdom: and to men unacquainted with the climate, the navigation of the Mediterranean in the winter appeared a formidable undertaking. The English prince found himself compelled to return with his associates to Italy. He fixed his residence at Trepani, that he might resume his journey with the first appearance of spring; and dispatched his cousin Henry with private instructions to England. That prince was led by curiosity to visit Viterbo in the company of the kings of France and Sicily, to witness the election of a successor to pope Clement IV. Early one morning he entered a church to hear mass. After its conclusion he remained intent on his devotions, when he was suddenly alarmed by the sound of a well-known voice, exclaiming, "Thou traitor, Henry, thou shalt not escape." Turning he saw his two cousins, the outlaws Simon and Guy de Montfort; hastening towards him with their swords drawn, and in complete armour. The unfortunate prince immediately sprang to the altar. But the sanctity of the place could not save him. Of two clergymen who generously interposed, one was killed; and the other was left for dead. Henry himself fell under a multitude of wounds. The two brothers glutted their revenge with the mutilation of his dead body, dragged it to the door of the church, and mounted their horses in triumph under the

Murder
of prince
Henry.

1271.
Mar. 13.

CHAP. protection of the count Aldobrandini, Guy's
 II. father-in-law. This sacrilegious assassination spread a general gloom through the city. The Montforts were instantly excommunicated by the college of cardinals: Charles issued orders for their apprehension; and Philip publicly expressed the deepest horror of their conduct. These princes were perhaps sincere: but no demonstrations of grief or resentment could expunge from the mind of Edward the suspicion that, if the murder were not perpetrated, at least the escape of the murderers was effected, with their consent or connivance.¹¹⁹

Death of
 Richard
 king of the
 Romans.

Richard, the king's brother, still retained his pretensions to the empire. He had lately revisited his nominal kingdom, entertained the German princes at Worms, and abolished with their concurrence the exorbitant customs levied on the passage of merchandise by the towns on both banks of the Rhine. Though advanced in age he married a second wife, the daughter of Theodoric de Falquemort, a German baron: and proud of his young bride, hastened to display her superior beauty in his own country; but his vanity was checked by the melancholy catastrophe of his son, whose body he buried in the church of Hales, an abbey which he had founded. Soon afterwards his own remains were deposited in the same vault.

¹¹⁹ Rym. i. 871. 890. 392. ii. 4—10. Wikes, 92. 94.

At Kirkham, a paralytic stroke deprived him of the use of his limbs: nor could the skill of his physicians prolong his life above a few months. Henry followed his brother. Repeated maladies had gradually worn out the king's constitution. In the last year he had been in the most imminent danger, and had earnestly required by letter the return of prince Edward. On his recovery he undertook to provide for the liquidation of his debts, by appointing commissioners to receive and administer his revenue, reserving for his private use no more than one hundred and twenty pounds in the year.¹²⁰ But the death of his brother, the murder of his nephew, and the absence of his son, added anxiety of mind to infirmity of body: his health rapidly declined: and he expired at Westminster, with the most edifying sentiments, in the fifty-seventh year of his reign. The abbey church, which he had rebuilt from the foundations, was selected for the place of his burial, and his body was deposited in the very tomb out of which he had formerly removed into a golden shrine the bones of Edward the confessor. Many prelates and barons attended the funeral: before the tomb was covered, the earl of Gloucester stepped forward, and putting his hand on the body of the king, swore fealty to prince Edward: and his

CHAP.

II.

Dec. 12.

1272.

April 2.

And of
Henry.

Nov. 20.

¹²⁰ Rym. i. 371. Henry had on several other occasions retrenched the expenses of his household for the purpose of paying his debts. Paris, 697. 860.

CHAP.
II.

example was eagerly followed by the surrounding spectators. The new monarch was immediately proclaimed by the style of Edward, king of England, lord of Ireland, and duke of Aquitaine.¹²¹

The king's
character.

From the preceding pages the reader will have learned to appreciate the character of Henry. Gentle and credulous, warm in his attachments, and forgiving in his enmities, without vices, but also without energy, he was a good man, and a weak monarch. In a more peaceful age, when the empire of the laws had been strengthened by ha' its of obedience, he might have filled the throne with decency, perhaps with honour: but his lot cast him into one of the most turbulent periods of our history, without the talents to command respect, or the authority to enforce submission. Yet his incapacity was productive rather of inconvenience to himself than of misery to his subjects. Under his weak but pacific sway the nation grew more rapidly in wealth and prosperity than it had done under any of his military progenitors. Out of the fifty-six years, through which he extended

¹²¹ Rym. i. 333, 339. Wikes, 98. Annal. Wigorn. 499. By the native historians of the age the new church of Westminster was deemed superior in magnificence to any other in christendom. *Quam idem rex opere sumptuosissimo fabricatam, amota prorsus vetere, quæ nullius omnino valoris extiterat, de propriis fisci regalibus exitibus a fundamentis construxit, quæ quidem sumptibus et decore sic cæteris per orbem ecclesiis præponi decernitur, ut videatur comparem non habere.* Wikes, 89.

his reign, but a very small portion was marked with the calamities of war: the tenants of the crown were seldom dragged by him into foreign countries, or impoverished by scutages for the support of mercenary armies: the proprietors, deprived of two sources of wealth, the plunder of an enemy, and the ransom of captives, turned their attention to the improvement of their estates: salutary enactments invigorated the spirit of commerce: and there scarcely existed a port from the coast of Norway to the shores of Italy, that was not annually visited by English merchants. This statement may perhaps surprise those, who have listened only to the remonstrances of factious barons, or the complaints of discontented historians: but the fact is, that of all the kings since the conquest, Henry received the least money from the tenants of the crown. According to the most accurate calculation, the average amount of his expenses did not exceed twenty-four thousand marks per annum:¹²² and we are assured that in the course of a reign which continued half a century, the only extraordinary aids levied by him on the nation were two fifteenths, one thirtieth, and one fortieth for himself, and one twentieth for the relief of the holy land.¹²³ His great resource was

¹²² Postquam cœperat esse regni dilapidator. Paris, 814. If these words mean from his accession, the average is 24,000, if from the year in which he came of age, about 30,000 marks.

¹²³ Carte, ii. 171. Of course the aids are not included which the

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the tenth of the ecclesiastical revenues, which he received for some years: an impost which, though insufficient to rescue him from the pressure of poverty, was calculated from its partial operation to exasperate the minds of those who were compelled to pay it. The clergy struggled in vain to shake off the burden; their writers have laboured more successfully to interest in their favour the feelings of posterity by the description, probably the exaggerated description, of their wrongs.¹²⁴

Before I proceed to the history of the next king, I may be allowed to notice a few miscellaneous but interesting particulars, which regard the legislature, the laws, the police, and the church of England.

Constitution of parliament.

I. During the reign of Henry, but while he was under the control of Leicester, we are surprised at the unexpected appearance of a parlia-

tenants of the crown were obliged to pay by their tenures, and which were reckoned in the ordinary revenue of the year.

¹²⁴ Of these writers the most querulous is Matthew Paris, a monk of St. Alban's, partly the author, partly the compiler of the ponderous volume, which with Rishanger's continuation has been published under his name. It contains many original and some valuable documents: but the writer, accustomed to lash the great, whether clergy or laity, seems to have collected and preserved every malicious and scandalous anecdote, that could gratify his censorious disposition. It may appear invidious to speak harshly of this favourite historian: but this I may say, that when I could confront his pages with authentic records, or contemporary writers, I have in most instances found the discrepancy between them so great, as to give to his narrative the appearance of a romance rather than a history.

ment, constituted as our present parliaments are of the lords spiritual and temporal, and the representatives of the counties, cities, and boroughs.¹²⁵ Was this the innovation of a bold and politic adventurer, or merely the repetition of an ancient and accustomed form? Something more than a century ago, the question was fiercely debated between the adverse champions of the prerogative of the crown, and the liberties of the people: since that period it has been investigated with more coolness and impartiality: and most writers have agreed to pronounce the assembly of 1265 a new experiment, devised for the purpose of extending the influence, and procuring support to the projects, of Leicester.

1^o In the history of the preceding reigns we shall search in vain for any satisfactory evidence that the cities and burghs sent their representatives to the national councils. Historians, indeed, sometimes mention the people, or the multitude, as awaiting the decision of the assembly, and testifying their approbation by their applause: but such passages may with propriety be understood of the neighbouring inhabitants, whom curiosity might lead to the spot; of the culprits and petitioners, the suitors and pledges, whose duty or whose interest it was to be present; and of the clergymen and monks, the knights and esquires, who were in attend-

Originally
it comprised only
the tenants in
chief

¹²⁵ See p. 191.

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ance on their lords, the prelates and barons.¹²⁶ If at a later period some boroughs claimed the privilege of representation from remote antiquity, or if the members of the lower house boasted that they had formed a constituent part of the legislature from time beyond the memory of man; such pretensions may be attributed either to their ignorance of history, or to the use of legal expressions without any definite meaning.¹²⁷ To me all the great councils under the first Norman kings appear to have been constituted on feudal principles. The sovereign might claim an extraordinary aid from his liege man; but the consent of the man was requisite to legalize the aid: he might seek to make alterations in the laws and customs of the realm; but he was previously expected to ask the advice of those vassals, whose rights and interests it was his duty, as their lord, to protect and improve.

¹²⁶ If the passage sometimes quoted from Eadmer (p. 26) prove any thing, it will prove that all the clergymen and monks, who attended the archbishop, were members of the council: and the other passage from the *Gesta Stephani* (p. 932, 933) seems to describe nothing more than the crowd of spectators. The rolls mention the approbation of the spectators, as being given occasionally to the determinations of parliament, even in the reign of Richard II. Rot. Parl. iii. 560.

¹²⁷ The borough of St. Alban's, in a petition to the council in the reign of Edward II., says it had sent representatives under the king's father and his predecessors: that of Barnstaple, that it had always sent representatives by virtue of a charter of king Athelstan which unfortunately was lost. I suspect that the framers of such petitions were accustomed to give to their pretensions an antiquity which, they knew, would not bear investigation.

Hence all who held in barony were summoned to the great council: but, as the reader has seen, a line of distinction was soon drawn between the greater barons, the lords spiritual and temporal, and the lesser barons, the inferior tenants in chief. From their great property the former (and through them their numerous tenantry) were deeply interested in almost every legislative enactment: and so extensive was their influence, that the royal authority could not, without their concurrence, carry any law into execution. Hence their presence in the national councils was exacted as a duty: and every unjustifiable failure on their part was punishable as a breach of that fealty, which they owed to the crown. But with the inferior tenants the case was different. Their consent was implied in that of the greater barons: and as attendance must have proved expensive and inconvenient to men of small fortunes, it was but seldom enforced.¹²⁸ Hence on ordinary occasions

¹²⁸ If we seek to discover the members of these councils in the description given of them in the original writs, our labour will be fruitless. There is something singularly ambiguous in their language. Thus in the confirmation of the great charter (9th Henry III.) we are told that a fifteenth has been granted in return by the bishops, earls, barons, knights, free tenants, and all of the kingdom—*omnes de regno*—an expression which would induce a belief that the representatives of the free tenants, the cities and boroughs, were present. Yet such inference cannot be supported. For in another writ we have a grant by the “earls, barons, and all others of” the whole kingdom, *omnes alii de toto regno nostro*: and yet the same persons a few lines lower are described as the “earls,

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the great council appears to have been composed of the bishops and abbots, the earls and barons, the ministers and judges, and the neighbouring knights, holding of the crown: but on others, when the safety of the kingdom was at stake, or an extraordinary aid was to be granted, the king convoked an assembly of all his tenants in chief: in more early times perhaps by a summons directed to each individual separately,¹²⁹ afterwards by personal writs to the greater barons, and a general writ to the other tenants in each county.¹³⁰

Introduc-
tion of
knights of
the shire.

20. But though the immediate vassals of the crown were the only individuals possessing a personal right to be present in parliament, there

“barons, and all others holding in chief of the crown, et omnium aliorum qui de nobis tenent in capite.” (Cl. 19 Hen. III. Brad. i. App. p. 43.) In the same reign we find a fortieth granted by the bishops, earls, barons, knights, freemen, and *villains* (Claus. 16 Hen. III. Brad. ii. App. N^o. 151). Certainly the villains sent no representatives, and yet they are said to have made the grant. Probably, as the lord could at any time with the permission of the crown raise money by tallage on his free tenants, his burgesses, and his villeins, their consent was understood to be included in his. Thus in the grant of a thirtieth, five years later, it is said to have been made by the bishops, earls, barons, knights, and freemen for themselves, and their villeins—*pro se et villanis suis*. Cl. 21 Hen. III. Brad. ii. App. N^o. 159.

¹²⁹ Thus, when king John before the grant of Magna Charta sent only a general summons to his barons, knights, and all his liege men from Rochelle, he excused the informality of the writ, by alleging the necessity of expedition. *Unicuique vestrum si fieri posset literas nostras super hoc transmissemus, sed ut negotium cum majore expediretur festinatione has literas, &c.* Pat. 15 Johan. Brad. i. 40.

¹³⁰ Mag. Chart. c. 11.

are some instances in which the representatives of the counties were required to attend previously to the year 1265. It must at all times have been difficult for the sovereign to become acquainted with the real state of the country, from the interested reports either of his barons or his ministers. If then he wished to ascertain his own rights, or the wrongs of the people, or the peculations of his officers, he was accustomed to authorize a commission of knights in each shire, either named by himself, or elected in the county court, to proceed from hundred to hundred, to make inquiries upon oath, and to lay the result of their labours before him, either in council or parliament. Thus we are told that William the conqueror, when he resolved to ratify the statutes of his Anglo-Saxon predecessors, ordered twelve "noble and sage men" to be chosen in each county, who should meet in his presence, and determine by common consent, what were the real laws of the kingdom.¹³¹ In the Magna Charta the reader has seen a provision, according to which twelve knights were to be elected in the next court of each county, to inquire into the "evil customs of sheriffs, of "forests and foresters, of warrens and warren-
"ers, and of the wardens of banks and their
"officers." Henry III. in his seventh year (1223) ordered every sheriff to inquire by means

¹³¹ Hoved. 343.

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of twelve lawful and discreet knights, what were the rights and liberties of the crown in his shire, on the day on which the war began between John and the barons:¹³² and in his 42d year (1258) he appointed four knights in each county to inquire into all the "excesses, transgressions, "and injuries committed by judges, sheriffs, "bailiffs, and all other persons, and to make "their report to him in council on a certain "day."¹³³ The same may be observed with respect to the collection of taxes. In the most ancient instance on record, in the year 1206, the subsidy was collected under the inspection of the itinerant judges: but the method was accompanied with inconvenience and delay: and in 1220 we find writs to the sheriff, appointing him the collector in conjunction with two knights to be chosen in a full court of the county with the consent of all the suitors.¹³⁴ I am aware that such knights were not members of parliament, but I have mentioned these instances to shew that the election of knights of the shire to transact the business of the county, was a custom of ancient standing. They collected the taxes: and made to the king the report of their grievances. When, however, they had advanced thus far, it required but an additional step to introduce them into the great council as the representatives of their electors, vested with the

¹³² Brad. ii. App. N^o. 149.¹³³ Ibid. N^o. 196.¹³⁴ Ibid. N^o. 83. and tom. i. App. p. 41.

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power of granting money, and of petitioning for redress; almost the only functions which for a long period after its establishment the house of commons ventured to exercise. In confirmation of this theory it may be observed, that the knights of the shire, when they became regular members of parliament, received the same remuneration, which had been assigned to them on former occasions. Anciently as soon as they had made their report to the king,¹³⁵ afterwards at the conclusion of the session, they obtained writs, directing the sheriffs to defray by a rate to be levied on the county their expenses for so many days "in going, staying, and returning." The peers attended in their own right, and of course paid their own costs: but the knights were only the deputies of others, and therefore required compensation from those, whose business they undertook to transact.

The most ancient writ, summoning the representatives of the counties to parliament is dated in the 15th year of John, 1213. It may be divided into three parts. In the first the knights who had already been warned, were ordered to meet the king in arms at Oxford on a certain day. This was a summons to perform military service. The second part alluded to some occurrence not mentioned by historians, and directed the sheriff to bring up the bodies of the

In the
reign of
king John.

¹³⁵ Brad, ii. App. 197, 198.

CHAP. barons without arms, probably prisoners in his
 II. custody for trial. In the third it is ordered that
 four discreet knights of the county should be
 sent to Oxford to treat with the king concerning
 the affairs of the kingdom.¹³⁶ There can be little
 doubt that this last was a summons to parlia-
 ment, as it is conceived in the same words as
 such writs of a later date. On the face of the
 writ, indeed, it does not appear whether the
 knights were to be chosen by the county, or ap-
 pointed by the sheriff. But this ambiguity is
 done away in that which follows. In 1254
 Henry III. was in Gascony: and by his direc-
 tions queen Eleanor, and the earl of Cornwall,
 the regents, summoned all persons holding land
 of the crown in chief, to the amount of twenty
 pounds per annum, to assemble at Portsmouth
 on an appointed day, and sail to the assistance
 of the king: and then ordered that, “ besides
 “ these, two lawful and discreet knights should
 “ be chosen by the men of every county in the
 “ place of all and each of them, to assemble at
 “ Westminster, and to determine with the knights
 “ of the other counties, what aid they would
 “ grant to their sovereign in his present neces-
 “ sity, so that the same knights might be able

¹³⁶ *Præcipimus tibi quod omnes milites ballivæ tuæ qui summo-
 niti fuerunt esse apud Oxoniam ad nos a die omnium sanctorum in
 quindecim dies, venire facias cum armis suis: corpora vero baro-
 num sine armis singulariter; et quatuor discretos milites de comi-
 tatu tuo illuc venire facias ad eundem terminum ad loquendum
 nobiscum de negotiis regni nostri. XI. die Nov. Apud. Seld. 783.*

“to answer in the matter of the said aid for their respective counties.”¹³⁷ This writ embraces two objects. From the greater vassals of the crown it requires military service: from the other inhabitants of each county it demands pecuniary aid; and for that purpose prescribes the election of representatives, whose determination should be binding on their constituents. Whether the barons were summoned to assemble at the same place with the knights of the shires, is uncertain, but immaterial. For in that age the different orders voted their own money separately, and without the interference of each other. The next instance (which has been mentioned in the preceding pages) occurred seven years later. Leicester had summoned a parliament at St. Alban’s, “to which each county was ordered to send three knights, that they might treat of the common concerns of the kingdom.” But in the interval, a temporary reconciliation took place between him and Henry, and it was agreed that the king should hold the parliament on the same day at Wind-

¹³⁷ *Præter omnes prædictos venire facias coram concilio nostro quatuor legales et discretos milites de comitatibus prædictis (Bedford and Bucks), quos iidem comitatus ad hoc elegerint—vice omnium et singulorum eorundem, viz. : duos de uno comitatu et duos de alio, ad providendum una cum militibus aliorum comitatum quale auxilium nobis in tanta necessitate impendere voluerunt. . . . Ita quod præfati quatuor milites præfato concilio nostro ad prædictum terminum respondere possint super prædicto auxilio pro singulis comitatibus prædictis.* 2 Prynne, p. 23. Brady, i 212.

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sor, and should issue new writs ordering the attendance of the same knights. They were called “to treat on the same subjects, and to convince themselves that the king intended nothing which was not for the honour and common advantage of the realm.”¹³⁸ This appears to me to have been a real parliament, and was followed by the celebrated assembly of 1265.

Their qualifications.

But in this stage of the inquiry a question occurs, which, if we judge only from the reasoning that has been expended upon it, must be of very difficult solution. Were the knights of the shire the representatives of the tenants of the crown only, or of the whole body of freeholders? Many distinguished antiquaries have maintained that to ease the lesser barons from the burden of personal attendance, they were permitted to send their representatives: and thence have inferred that the other landholders of the county were totally excluded from all share in the election. But when we consider the language of the ancient writs, this theory will appear extremely improbable. Some ambiguity might perhaps arise from the expression of free tenants, which was occasionally used to designate both the tenants of the crown by military service, and all other tenants by free service.¹³⁹ But

¹³⁸ Brady, ii. N^o. 203.

¹³⁹ The distinction between them was accurately made by Fitz-Peter the justiciary. He orders the earls and barons to collect the fortieth for the crusade from their tenants—from their military tenants a full fortieth, per ser-

can we believe that, if the exclusion did actually exist, it would never have been alluded to? The writs themselves seem to prescribe the opposite practice. They never mention the tenants in chief. They require no other qualification in the candidate, than that he should be a lawful and discreet knight, nor in the electors than that they should be suitors of the county. They ordain that the election should be made in a full court, which, we know, comprehended all the free tenants without distinction,¹⁴⁰ and vest the persons elected with the power of binding by their votes not merely the tenants of the crown but all individuals owing suit to the county. In absence then of all authority to the contrary, it cannot be thought rash to assert, that the election belonged formerly, as it did in after ages, to the freeholders at large, whether they held of the king, or of a mesne lord, or by military, or any other free service.

3^o. But if we occasionally discover the knights of the shire among the members of

Representatives of cities and boroughs.

vitium militare tenentes—from their free tenants a fortieth after the deduction of their rent; si fuerent libere tenentes—and then calls it a collection from the earls, barons, knights, and free tenants. Hoved. 471. Where it appears that by the word milites, he meant military tenants, by libere tenentes, all others holding by free service.

¹⁴⁰ Thus the great charter was to be published in a full court, and we are told that the full court consisted of the barons, knights, and all the freeholders of the same county (Brad. ii. App. N^o. 145) exactly in the words of Fitz-Peter. In pleno comitatu tuo convocatis baronibus, militibus, et omnibus libere tenentibus.

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the great councils, we have no sufficient reason to believe that they were accompanied by the deputies of the cities and boroughs. Among the writs which were issued during the reigns of John and his son, and of which many have been preserved, there exists no vestige of a summons directing the return of citizens and burgesses more ancient than the administration of Leicester. We may safely pronounce it an innovation: but an innovation which the course of events must otherwise have introduced within a few years. During the lapse of two centuries the cities and boroughs had silently grown out of their original insignificance, and had begun to command attention from their constant increase in wealth and population. Taking advantage of the poverty of their lords, the inhabitants had successively purchased for themselves the most valuable privileges. In lieu of individual services they now paid a common rent: their guilds were incorporated by charter: they had acquired the right of holding fairs, of demanding tolls, of choosing their chief magistrates, and of enacting their own laws. They were able to supply both men and money: and it became the obvious policy of the crown to attach them to its interests, by lightening their burdens, and attending to their petitions. Formerly, whenever the king obtained an aid from his tenants in chief, he imposed a tallage on his boroughs, which was levied at discretion by a capitation

tax on personal property.¹⁴¹ Though the inhabitants did not dispute this right of the crown, they bore with impatience the grievances, which on such occasions they experienced from the despotism of the royal officers: and frequently offered in place of the tallage a considerable sum, under the name of a gift; which, if it were accepted, was assessed and paid by their own magistrates.¹⁴² This was in reality to indulge them with the liberty of taxing themselves: and when the innovation had been once introduced, it was obviously more convenient in itself, and more consistent with the national customs, that the new privilege should be exercised by deputies assembled together, instead of being intrusted to the discordant judgment of so many separate communities. This did not escape

¹⁴¹ Thus Henry III., in his 21st year, obtained a thirtieth from the tenants of the crown and the freeholders of the counties (Brady, ii. App. N^o. 159): and at the same time exacted a tallage from the cities, boroughs, and demesne lands of the crown. *Sicut civitates, burgos, et dominica nostra talliari fecimus.* Brad. i. 95.

¹⁴² This distinction was made as early as the reign of Henry II. *Plurimum interest si donum vel auxilium civitatis per singula capita comorantium in ea a justiciariis constitutor: vel si cives summam aliquam quæ principe digna videatur justiciariis efferant, et ab eis suscipiatur.* Apud Brad. i. 178. Thus when Henry III. in his 39th year demanded a tallage of 3000 marks of the citizens of London, they offered a gift of 2000, maintaining at the same time that they were not subject to tallage. But it was proved from the records in the chancery and the exchequer that they had been talliated in the years 1214, 1223, 1242, 1245, 1249, 1253: and the next day they thought proper to submit. See the original writ in Brady, i. 178.

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the discernment of Leicester: and if the improvement was abandoned after his fall,¹⁴³ (probably on account of the disgrace attached to his memory) its utility was appreciated by the succeeding monarch, who before the close of his reign regularly called to parliament the representatives of the cities and boroughs as well as those of the counties.

Representatives of the inferior clergy.

4^o. From the multitude of abbots and priors summoned by Leicester in 1264, some writers have inferred that he wished to secure a majority among the members by the introduction of his partisans from the monastic orders.¹⁴⁴ The truth is, that there was nothing unusual in the number. Originally indeed the obligation of attending at the great councils was confined to those ecclesiastics, who held their lands by barony:¹⁴⁵ but *they* formed only a small portion of the regular and secular clergy, while the rest, though inferior in wealth and dignity, enjoyed the ad-

¹⁴³ According to Hody (Hist. of Convocations, p. 369) the burgesses attended at the parliament of 1269. He depends on the authority of Wikes, who indeed tells us that Henry summoned the most powerful men from the cities and boroughs to attend at the translation of the body of Edward the Confessor: as formerly on his return from France in 1243, he had summoned four deputies from each city and borough to meet him on the road in their best clothes and on valuable horses (Paris, 534). But this was merely to do him honour on a particular occasion. Wikes then adds, that when the ceremony of the translation was over, a parliament was held by the *nobles*, an expression which seems to exclude the citizens and burgesses. Wikes, 88, 89.

¹⁴⁴ Brady, i. 139. Henry, viii. 94.

¹⁴⁵ Leg. Sax. 324.

vantage of possessing their incomes free from the exactions to which the feudal tenants were subject. It was not, however, long before the rapacity of the crown invaded this valuable immunity. At first attempts were made to extend the aids granted by the bishops for themselves, to all the clergy of their respective dioceses: but these were effectually resisted, probably on the ground that the prelates had no authority to dispose of the property of others.¹⁴⁶ John, in the year 1206, surmounted the difficulty. He called all the abbots and priors to parliament, and obtained from them the vote of a thirteenth: and then wrote to the archdeacons and clergy of each diocese, exhorting them to imitate so laudable an example, and to let him know by a certain day the amount of the aid which each individual was willing to grant.¹⁴⁷ His son trod in the footsteps of the father: at one time he commissioned the bishops to collect a voluntary contribution from the clergy:¹⁴⁸ at another he ordered the sheriffs to summon to parliament the abbots and priors "who did not hold of the crown," in order to grant him a subsidy:¹⁴⁹ at last it became customary to issue writs, not only to them, but

¹⁴⁶ See an instance in the annals of Waverley, p. 169.

¹⁴⁷ See the original writ, dated at York, May 26, ann. viii^o. in Hody, 270.

¹⁴⁸ Dunst. 98. 208.

¹⁴⁹ Abbates et priores de comitatu qui non tenent de rege in capite. Cl. 19 Hen. III. apud Hody, 313.

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also to the deans, and archdeacons, and to order the latter to come furnished with letters of procuration from the collegiate bodies, and those portions of the inferior clergy over which they presided.¹⁵⁰ The exactions of Innocent IV. suggested a new practice. The grants to that pontiff had been voted in convocation: and Edward I. conceived that the wants of the crown might be relieved in the same manner. During the whole of his reign we find him demanding aids of the clergy, sometimes in parliament, sometimes in convocation. In the first case all the minor dignitaries of the church were summoned to attend personally: while the parochial clergy of each diocese, like the freeholders of each county, sent representatives.¹⁵¹ In the second the king notified his wish to the archbishop; who immediately convoked the clergy of his province to take into consideration the message which they should receive from the king.¹⁵² Of the

¹⁵⁰ In 1254, Henry III. requested each bishop to call before him the chapter, archdeacons, monks, and clergy of his diocese, induce them to grant an aid, and order them to send deputies to inform him of their proceedings in the next parliament. Cl. 33 Henry III. apud Hody, 310. See also *Annal. Burton*, 355—357.

¹⁵¹ *Decanos ecclesiarum cathedralium et archidiaconos in propriis personis, clerumque uniuscujusque diocesis per duos procuratores.* Knyght, 2501.

¹⁵² Thus archbishop Peckham calls a convocation of the bishops, abbots, priors, superiors of religious houses, exempt and not exempt, deans of cathedral and collegiate churches, and the archdeacons, to appear before him super his, quæ ex parte domini regis in congregatione prædicta exposita fuerint, tractaturi: and moreover orders

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two methods the clergy preferred the latter: attendance in parliament they deemed a burden rather than an honour: and in convocation they enjoyed greater freedom of debate, uninfluenced by the presence or the menaces of others. Gradually the crown condescended to their wishes. Provided they granted their money, it was of little consequence whether they met in convocation or parliament: and though to maintain his right, the king was careful to include in the summons to the bishop the usual clause respecting the clergy of his diocese, it was mutually understood to be a mere matter of form, and not meant to be carried into execution.

II. The reader has witnessed the repeated attempts of the legislature to enforce the execution of the great charter. Its provisions now became the chief object of the people in every struggle with the crown: and each succeeding confirmation, though a proof of the impunity with which the former had been evaded or broken, yet added something to its subsequent stability. As new cases arose, additional enactments were made. In a great council at Merton in 1235 the rights of widows were more accurately defined: remedies were provided against the artifices by which lords had been deprived of

Decision
respecting
the ques-
tion of
bastardy.

two procurators to be chosen by the clergy of each diocese, and one by each chapter of collegiate churches, with full powers to treat on the same subjects. *Ex Reg. Peckham apud Hody, 133.*

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the wardships of heirs, and against the injuries which wards might suffer from the rapacity of their guardians ; and with a due attention to the interests of the lord and his tenants, the former was empowered to cultivate the waste land on his estate, but at the same time forbidden to encroach on the common pasturage necessary for the accomodation of the latter.¹⁵³ In this assembly was also decided the great question of the bastardy of children born before the marriage of their parents. By the custom of England they were deprived of all title to the inheritance: by the civil and canon laws they were equally legitimate with the children born in matrimony. Hence as the cognizance of bastardy belonged to the spiritual courts, which followed the latter, and the right of inheritance was determined by the secular courts, which followed the former, opinion, the two judicatures were frequently brought into collision: and the bishops requested that the king's writs should no longer direct them to inquire specially whether the individual in question were born before or after marriage, but generally whether he were legitimate or not. They objected to the practice of the other courts: 1^o That it was contrary to the Roman and canon law ; 2^o That it was unjust ; because it deprived of the right of inheritance the issue of clandestine marriages, though such marriages were not

¹⁵³ St. 23 Hen. III.

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annulled by any law ; and 3^o That it was inconsistent with itself ; because, while it bastardized the child born, it legitimated the child that was only conceived, before marriage, though in both cases the moral guilt of the parents was exactly the same. But their arguments were fruitless.¹⁵⁴

The earls and barons unanimously returned the answer, which has been so often repeated and applauded : “ We will not change the old and “ approved laws of England.”¹⁵⁵

But if the clergy failed in this instance, they had previously succeeded in procuring the abolition of a very ancient but indefensible custom. Though the trial by ordeal was consecrated with religious ceremonies, the popes had always condemned it as an unwarranted appeal to the judgment of the Almighty : and by Gratian the condemnation had been inserted in the canon law. On this account, it was abolished, probably by the influence of Gualo, in the beginning of the king’s reign : but to devise a new form of trial, which might be substituted in its stead, perplexed and confounded the wisdom both of

Abolition
of the or-
deal.

¹⁵⁴ See a letter from the celebrated Grosseteste, bishop of Lincoln, to sir William Raleigh, one of the judges, apud Brown, App. ad Fascic. Rer. p. 316. From it we learn that during the performance of the marriage ceremony, the illegitimate children were placed by the side of their parents, and under the same canopy, to shew that they partook of the benefits arising from a legitimate marriage.

¹⁵⁵ *Nolunt leges Angliæ mutare, quæ usitatæ sunt et approbatæ.*
St. 23 Hen. III. c. 9.

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the judges and of the government. The itinerant justices received orders in Henry's third year to divide the prisoners who would otherwise have been subjected to the ordeal, into three classes. When the presumption against the accused was strong, and his character notoriously bad, he was to be remanded to prison and kept in close custody till his fate should be determined by the council: a few shades of difference in the malice of the offence, or a greater degree of uncertainty as to his guilt, or a more favourable character, placed him in the second class of those who were compelled to abjure the realm: if he had been committed for a minor transgression only, or for some breach of the king's peace, he was to be set at liberty on giving security for his good behaviour.¹⁵⁶ What subsequent measures were adopted, we are not told: but there can be little doubt that the abolition of the trial by ordeal contributed greatly to establish that invaluable institution, the trial by jury.

System of
police.

III. In his thirty-sixth year Henry published regulations for the preservation of the peace, which deserve the notice of the inquisitive reader. 1^o He renewed and improved the assize of arms, which had been introduced by his grandfather. The different classes were modelled anew: and every man between the ages of fifteen and sixty was ranked according to his annual income aris-

¹⁵⁶ Selden, *Spicil.* 204.

ing from land or moveables, from the amount of forty shillings to that of fifteen pounds. 2^o All these were sworn to provide themselves with the arms proper to their class, and were ordered to join, whenever they should be required, the hue and cry in the pursuit of offenders. For this purpose they were placed under the command of their respective officers; in the cities and boroughs under the mayor and bailiffs, and in the villages under the constable or constables of the township, all of whom obeyed the authority of the chief constable of the hundred. 3^o Watch was ordered to be kept from sunset to sunrise during the nights between the feast of the Ascension and that of St. Michael: in the villages by four or six stout and good men armed with bows and arrows and other light weapons: in the boroughs by a company of twelve, and in the cities by companies of six stationed at every gate. If any stranger attempted to enter or depart after the watch was set, he was instantly arrested, and confined for examination till the following morning: nor could a traveller, who arrived by daylight, remain longer than two days in any village or township, unless it were during the time of harvest, or his host would become surety for his conduct. For the greater security of the merchant who was on his road, the mayor and bailiff were bound to furnish him, on requisition, with a guard: and if he numbered his money in their presence, and were afterwards robbed, he could

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recover the amount of his loss from the inhabitants, who were judged guilty of a breach of their duty to the king by neglecting to pursue the measures necessary to preserve his peace in their neighbourhood.¹⁵⁷

Account of
Stephen
Langton.

IV. The church of England during this period was adorned by the virtues and abilities of several among its prelates, three of whom may justly claim the attention of the reader. 1^o He is already acquainted with the character of cardinal Langton, his zeal in the cause of freedom, his suspension from the archiepiscopal office, and his compulsory visit to the court of Rome. As

1218. soon as Henry was firmly fixed on the throne, Langton received permission to resume the government of his diocese. From that period he chiefly confined his attention to ecclesiastical concerns: and the fruit of his labours was a code of discipline of forty-two canons, which he published in a synod at Oxford.¹⁵⁸ But he still continued to behold the two charters with the attachment of a parent: and at the call of the barons, readily placed himself again at their

1222. head to demand from Henry the confirmation of

1223.

¹⁵⁷ Apud Paris, 1145, et pone adversaria.

¹⁵⁸ In this synod a clergyman in deacon's orders was convicted of apostacy, delivered to the secular power, and condemned to be burnt. He had suffered himself to be circumcised, that he might marry a Jewish woman. This is, I believe, the first instance of capital punishment in England on the ground of religion: but it occurred long before the statute de hæretico comburendo. Wikes, 39. Waverley, 187.

their liberties. He died in 1228. His writings have perished: he is said to have divided the Bible into chapters, an improvement which was universally adopted, and is still retained.

CHAP.

II.

1228.
July 9.

2^o. The second of the successors of Langton was Dr. Edmund Rich, a prelate universally acknowledged to be equal in learning, superior in piety, to most men of the age. He studied and taught in the university of Paris; returned to England to deliver lectures at Oxford: and was made prebendary and treasurer of the church of Saruin. His next preferment was to the highest dignity in the English church, the archiepiscopal see of Canterbury. It was with unfeigned reluctance that he accepted it. He felt that the timidity of his conscience would not suffer him to acquiesce in the disorders of the age, and that the gentleness of his temper had not fitted him for the stern occupation of a reformer. Experience justified his apprehensions: many disapproved of his zeal; and the monks of his own church, the ministers of the crown, and the pontiffs themselves, often opposed, occasionally defeated, his well-meant endeavours. For several years he struggled against these difficulties: at length he sank under them. Fearing that he might appear to approve by his presence the abuses which he could not remedy by his authority, he voluntarily exiled himself from England, chose for his residence the monastery of Pontigni in France, and died the following

Of Arch-
bishop
Edmund.1234.
April 2.1240:
Nov. 16.

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II.

year at Soissey, where he had removed for the benefit of the air. Even his adversaries acknowledged the innocence of his life, and the uprightness of his motives: and within six years after his death, he was canonized by Innocent IV. with the unanimous approbation of the bishops of England and France.¹⁵⁹

Of Robert
Grosse-
teste.

30. The third prelate whom I shall mention is one to whose history considerable interest has been attached by the partiality of modern writers. Robert Grosseteste was indebted for his education to the charity of the mayor of Lincoln: and by his proficiency amply repaid the discernment of his benefactor. He taught at Oxford with unbounded applause: in the catalogue of his works we discover treatises on almost every branch of science: and he was pronounced by friar Bacon (a competent judge for the age) perfect in divine and human knowledge.¹⁶⁰ From a prebendal stall he was promoted to the episcopal throne in the church of Lincoln: and an extensive diocese offered him a fair field for the display of his abilities, and the exertions of his zeal. With the same views as his metropolitan he brought to the contest a very different character: a resolution of mind which no difficulty could daunt, no defeat could subdue. When that amiable prelate advised him to desist from an impracticable attempt, and wait in patience

1225.

¹⁵⁹ Paris, 476. 486. 627.

¹⁶⁰ Ang. Sax. ii. 341. 345.

for more favourable times, he replied that he should do his duty, and leave the consequences to heaven. He had persuaded himself that every disorder in the flock might be ultimately traced to the negligence or incapacity of the pastor: and grounding his conduct on this principle, invariably refused institution to every pluralist; to clergymen employed in courts of judicature, or the collection of the revenue; to all, who from disposition or circumstances were unwilling or unable to reside on their benefices. The presentees complained; the patrons stormed; the ministers of the crown threatened: but no complaints, nor reproaches, nor threats could move the resolution of Grosscete.¹⁶¹ In the visitation of his diocese he experienced more formidable difficulties. The laity sheltered themselves from his inquiries under the protection of the civil courts: the clerical and monastic bodies pleaded ancient custom or papal exemptions: and all parties appealed to the protection of the king, and the equity of the pontiff. To break or surmount the opposition which had been formed against him, cost the bishop much anxiety and expense; several harassing lawsuits, and two journeys to the papal court. By Innocent IV. he was not only treated with respect, but the principal of his demands were granted; and those powers were delegated to him which ap-

1245,
and
1250.

¹⁶¹ Gross. ep. 11. 53. 103. 124. 125. 123. Par. 507. Dunst. 252.

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peared necessary for the reformation of his diocese.¹⁶² His chapter was brought to acknowledge not only a nominal, but an effective jurisdiction in their bishop. He visited the convents and monasteries, deposed negligent or inefficient superiors, and enforced the observation of the monastic rules¹⁶³ with an exactitude, which earned for him the honour of being reviled by the historian of St. Alban's.¹⁶⁴

In his transactions with the court of Rome Grosseteste exhibited an equal inflexibility of character. No man, indeed, ever professed a more profound veneration for the successors of St. Peter, or entertained more exalted notions of their prerogatives. From his works it appears that he gave to their decretals the force of law

¹⁶² At his second visit to Lyons, Grosseteste presented a memorial on the evils of the church, which proves how little he was disposed to flatter, even when he solicited a favour. It may be divided into three parts. In the first he describes the evil of bad pastors, which he refers ultimately to the papal court, because it might prevent it, if it chose, and because it encouraged it by provisions and impropriations: in the second he enumerates the obstacles opposed to the zeal of the bishops by exemptions, appeals, secular judges, the ingenuity of lawyers, and the hostility of ministers: in the third he paints the abuses to be remedied in the papal court itself, the irregular conduct of the lower class of servants, the venality of the judges, and the immoderate use of the clause *non obstante*. To the honour of Innocent he ordered this memorial to be read in the consistory of the cardinals, and gave the bishop repeated proofs of his esteem. See Brown, *Fascicul. ii.* 250. Gross. ep. 113, 114.

¹⁶³ Gross. ep. 77. 80, 81. 90. 95. 121. Paris, 603. 704. 713. Burt. 317. 323. Duns. 230. 236, 237. 284.

¹⁶⁴ Paris, 713.

in all christian nations: that he maintained as the cause of God every immunity which they had conferred on the clergy; and that he inculcated with unusual vehemence the doctrine of what has since been termed the *indirect* superiority of the spiritual over the temporal power.¹⁶⁵

Yet, with these sentiments as to the nature, he would often dispute the exercise, of their authority. Neither pope nor legate could prevail on him to give institution to foreign clergymen, presented to benefices in his diocese.¹⁶⁶ When the nuncio sent him a provision, by which Frederic of Louvain, the nephew of Innocent IV., was promoted to a prebend in the church of Lincoln, Grosseteste replied in language singularly energetic, that the provision was contrary to the good of the church and the welfare of souls: that he would not consider it as emanating from the pontiff: and that he should never deem it his duty to carry it into execution.¹⁶⁷ This answer, bold as it may appear, was only a repetition of the doctrine which he had formerly maintained in the presence of Innocent himself:¹⁶⁸ and so far was it from exciting pas-

¹⁶⁵ Gross, ep. 23. 35. 111. Cui non obedire quasi peccatum est ariolandi, et quasi scelus idololatriæ non acquiescere. Ep. 119.

¹⁶⁶ Id. ep. 49. 52. 74.

¹⁶⁷ Id. ep. 123.

¹⁶⁸ Sicut Christo in omnibus est obediendum, sic et præsentibus huic sedi sacratissimæ, in quantum vere præsentibus, in omnibus est obtemperandum: sin autem quis eorum, quod absit, quicquam præcipiat Christo præceptis et voluntati contrarium,

CHAP. II. sion or resentment in the breast of that pontiff, that, as soon as he received it from his agent, he wrote a letter in exculpation of his conduct, and proposed that remedy for the abuse of provisions, which has been already described in these pages.¹⁶⁹

1220. The principal advisers of Grosseteste were selected from the two new orders lately introduced into England, of friars preachers instituted by St. Dominic, and of friars minors established by St. Francis. Both were designed by their founders to aid the parochial clergy in the discharge of their functions: and they performed that duty with the zeal, which always invigorates the infancy of religious institutes. Their diet was abstemious, their clothing coarse and scanty: by the practice as well as the profession of poverty they excluded the suspicion of self-interest: and the people readily listened to the instruction of men, who could be actuated by no other motive than that of their spiritual welfare. From each of these orders Grosseteste called the most distinguished to his council: he was accompanied by them in his visitations: he ordered them to preach in his presence, and applauded and

obtemperans ei in hujusmodi manifeste se separat a Christo. Serm. Rob. Linc. apud Brown, ii. 254.

¹⁶⁹ See p. 19. The contemporary annalist of Burton assures us that Innocent's letter was occasioned by the reply of Grosseteste to his agent (Burt. 326—330); a sufficient refutation of the ridiculous tales which are told us by Paris, 750. 752. 755.

stimulated their exertions.¹⁷⁰ Thus he spent eight-and-twenty years in the administration and improvement of his diocese. His death was lamented as a public loss: his virtues were embalmed in the recollection of posterity.¹⁷¹

CHAP.
II.

1253.
Oct. 14.

Of Henry's children the greater part died in their childhood. Two sons and two daughters survived him. Edward the eldest had married Eleanor the daughter of Ferdinand king of Castile, and enjoyed during the life of his father a yearly income of fifteen thousand marks. Edmund had obtained by the forfeiture of the Montforts, the numerous estates with the honours of that family, and thus laid the foundation of that power, which enabled his descendants of the house of Lancaster to wrest the sceptre from the hands of Richard II., and retain it to the prejudice of the rightful heir. The daughters were Margaret queen of Scotland, and Beatrix dutchess of Bretagne.

¹⁷⁰ Gross. ep. 40, 41. 114.

¹⁷¹ The story that he died under a sentence of suspension or excommunication rests on very questionable authority. It probably arose from the comminatory denunciations of the provision, which he had rejected.

CHAP. III.

EDWARD I.

CONTEMPORARY PRINCES.

<i>Emprs. of Ger.</i>	<i>Kings of Scotland.</i>	<i>Kings of France.</i>	<i>Kings of Spain.</i>	<i>Popes.</i>
Rodolph. .1291.	Alexander III. 1285.	Philip III. . . 1285.	Alphonso X. 1284.	Gregory X. . . . 1276.
Adolphus. 1298.	Margaret. . . . 1290.	Philip IV.	Sancho IV. 1295.	Innocent V. . . . 1276.
Albert.	Interregnum. . 1292.		Ferdinand IV.	Adrian V. . . . 1276.
	Baliol. 1296.			John XXI. . . 1277.
	Interregnum. . 1306.			Nicholas III. 1280.
	Robert I.			Martin IV. . . 1285.
				Honorius IV. 1287.
				Nicholas IV. . 1292.
				Celestin V. . . 1294.
				Boniface VIII. 1303.
				Benedict XI. . 1304.
				Clement V.

EDWARD RETURNS FROM PALESTINE—CONQUERS WALES—
CLAIMS THE SUPERIORITY OF SCOTLAND—RECEIVES THE
ABDICATION OF BALIOL—IS OPPOSED BY WALLACE—CON-
QUERS SCOTLAND—COMMONS IN PARLIAMENT—ROYAL EX-
ACTIONS—OPPOSITION OF CLERGY AND BARONS—AIDS TO BE
LEVIED ONLY WITH CONSENT OF PARLIAMENT—IMPROVE-
MENT IN THE LAWS—PERSECUTION OF THE JEWS—BRUCE
CLAIMS THE CROWN OF SCOTLAND—EDWARD MARCHES TO
CARLISLE—AND DIES.

CHAP.
III.

Edward
sails to the
holy land.
1271.

IF Edward had been disposed to obey the will
of his father, he might have revisited England
without dishonour, when the army broke up on
the coast of Africa, and the principal leaders

returned to their respective dominions. But curiosity and devotion silenced the suggestions of duty and interest : he sailed from Trapano ; landed at Acre ; viewed from the walls the tents of the Saracens ; and mourned over the last relics of the empire founded by the first crusaders. His followers did not amount to one thousand men : but there was a magic in the name of a prince, whose blood was derived from the same source with that of the “ lion-hearted Richard ;” and both christians and infidels expected that he would equal the fame of that hero. Bondocar the sultan of Babylon, who had already prepared to assault the city, retired immediately across the desert into Egypt : and Abagha, the Tartar khan of Persia, proposed to him an offensive alliance against the common enemy of the Moguls and christians. But with every exertion he could never collect more than seven thousand men under his standard, a force too inconsiderable to venture far from the coast : and though he remained eighteen months at Acre, an expedition to Nazareth, the capture of two small castles, and the surprise of a caravan, comprehend the whole history of his military labours. Instead of the laurels of a conqueror accident invested him with the glory of a martyr. The emir of Joppa, by the instructions of Bondocar, and under the pretence of embracing christianity, had succeeded in obtaining the confidence of the prince : and frequent letters ac-

CHAP.
III.

April 20.

Sep. 4.

Is wounded by an assassin.

1272.
June 17.

CHAP.

III.

June 18.

accompanied with presents concealed and facilitated the design which he had formed.¹ On the Friday in Whitsun week, his messenger, whose repeated arrivals had relaxed the vigilance of the guards, was incautiously permitted to enter the apartment, in which Edward, clad in a loose mantle, was reposing on his couch during the heat of the day.² The infidel seized the opportunity to aim a desperate blow at the heart of the prince, who received it on his arm, grappled with the assassin, and throwing him on the ground, dispatched him with his own weapon. Still, however, the danger was great: the dagger had been dipped in poison: the wound assumed an alarming appearance, and Edward, aware of the probable consequences, hastened to prepare and sign his will. Fortunately every dangerous symptom was removed by the skill of an English surgeon, who pared away the sides of the wound: and in the course of three weeks, by the attentions of an affectionate wife, and the aid of a vigorous constitution, he was restored to perfect health. The adventure was of itself romantic enough: but a Spanish historian has contrived to add to its interest, by attributing his cure to the piety of Eleanor, who, with imminent hazard to her own life, is said to have

¹ The monk of Melrose received this account from a knight, one of the crusaders (241); and it is confirmed by William of Tripoli, who then resided at Acre. Spond. 245.

² Hora vesperarum—about three in the afternoon. Heming. 590.

sucked the poison from the wound of her husband.³

CHAP.
III.

The conclusion of a truce with the sultan for ten years gave a long respite to the christians of Acre, and allowed the prince an opportunity of returning to Europe with honour. At Trapano he received an invitation to Rome from Gregory X. That pontiff, with the more humble title of arch-deacon of Liege, had accompanied Edward in his expedition to Palestine : but the fame of his virtue and learning had induced the cardinals at Viterbo to recall him from Acre to fill the chair of St. Peter ; and the new pontiff was eager to display his gratitude to the prince, with whose friendship he had formerly been honoured. As Edward travelled through Sicily and Calabria, he received the first news of his father's death : and the tears which he shed on the occasion, though they excited the surprise of Charles of Anjou, bore honourable testimony to the goodness of his heart.⁴ He spent but two days at Rome : and proceeding to Civita Vecchia, was most affectionately received by Gregory, from whom he demanded justice against the assassins of his cousin, Henry d'Almaigne. Simon de Montford was already dead : but Guy, and his father-in-law Aldobrandini, were cited before the pontiff. The defence or purgation of the latter was admitted : the former, conscious of

Returns
to Europe.
Oct. 3.

1273.
Feb. 12.

Feb. 11.

³ Heming 590. West, 101. Sanut. 126.

⁴ Trivet, 240.

CHAP.
III.

April 1.

Travels
through
Italy.

his guilt, did not appear. He was convicted of sacrilege and murder, was pronounced infamous and an outlaw, and was rendered incapable of inheriting, possessing, or bequeathing property, or of filling any situation of trust, honour, or emolument in the state.⁵ Edward's journey through Italy was a triumphal procession: he was considered as the champion of christendom, the martyr of the cross: at every city the magistrates, clergy, and people, came out to receive him: and the Milanese forced on his acceptance valuable presents of horses and scarlet cloth.

May 30.

At the foot of mount Cenis he was met by the

⁵ Rym. i. 390. ii. 4—10. Here I may be allowed to pursue the history of Guy. Soon after the sentence had been pronounced, he solicited the clemency of Gregory, and took the opportunity to meet him at a short distance from Florence. In his shirt, with a halter round his neck, and attended by several friends in the same garb, he threw himself at the feet of the pontiff, and begged that the sentence against him might be commuted for imprisonment. Gregory was moved, ordered him to be confined in a castle of the ecclesiastical states, and wrote to Edward to apologize for his lenity (Rym. ii. 17). Six years afterwards it was reported that Guy had been seen in Norway: and the king promised a valuable reward to two Norwegian barons, if they would seize and deliver him to the royal agents (Id. ii. 143). But the report was unfounded. He was at last liberated, after a confinement of eleven years, by Martin IV., and took possession of Squillace, the patrimony of his wife, in Tuscany (Wals. 51). He adhered to the house of Anjou; was taken prisoner by Doria the Arragonian admiral, in 1237, and remained in captivity till his death. James king of Sicily, demanded for his ransom 10,000 ounces of gold, a sum which he knew it was impossible for him to pay. See a letter from his wife on the subject, Rym. ii. 30. It is placed by Rymer in 1274, instead of 1289, the true date.

CHAP.
III.

count of Savoy: and soon after received the congratulations of a body of English knights and prelates.⁶ He proceeded to Paris, and did homage to Philip for the lands which "he held "by right of the crown of France." From Paris it was expected that he would hasten to England: but he was called back to Guienne by the distracted state of that province, and detained there till the conclusion of the general council, which had been summoned to meet at Lyons. It was during this interval that he was challenged to a tournament by the count of Chalons: who, it was afterwards said, under the pretence of doing him honour, concealed a most atrocious design against his life. The pontiff by letter earnestly exhorted the king to refuse, observing to him that no monarch had ever condescended to tilt at a tournament; that such feats of arms had been forbidden by the church, on account of the murders with which they were frequently disgraced; and that it was folly in him thus to expose himself to the swords of the assassins, who, he had reason to suspect, at that very time thirsted for his blood.⁷ But Edward's honour was at stake: on the appointed day he entered the lists attended by a thousand champions partly on foot, partly on horseback: and was

Resides in
Guienne.
July 26.

1274.
May 1.

May 15.

May 18.

Tilts at a
tourna-
ment.

⁶ Wikes, 99. West. 402.

⁷ Rym. ii. 29, 30. These assertions of Gregory seem to countenance the suspicion of some writers, that the attempt to assassinate Edward at Acre, was in reality planned by the partisans of the house of Montfort.

CHAP.
III.

met by his antagonist with a retinue nearly double in number. It might be, that the English were exasperated by their suspicions, or that their opponents really entertained projects of bloodshed: but the trial of skill and strength was soon converted into a most deadly battle: Edward's archers drove their opponents out of the field, mixed among the knights, and sometimes cutting the girths of their saddles, sometimes ripping up the bowels of their horses, brought the riders to the ground, and secured them as prisoners. The count de Chalons, a most athletic man, after tilting with his spear, threw his arms round the king's neck to pull him from his seat. Edward's charger sprung forward at the same moment, and the count fell to the ground. He was replaced by his attendants: but his fall had rendered him incapable of exertion, and he demanded quarter. The king's passion induced him for a time to belabour a suppliant enemy: at length disdaining to receive his sword, he compelled him to surrender to one of the foot champions. The English gained the prize after a most dangerous and sanguinary contest.⁸

Treaty
with Flan-
ders.
1274.

Edward now began to think seriously of returning to England: he even issued orders for the necessary arrangements preparatory to his coronation.⁹ But his departure was again post-

⁸ Heming, 592. West, 402. Trivet, 241.

⁹ Orders were given to provide 300 head of cattle, 400 sheep,

poned for the discussion of a subject intimately connected with the mercantile interests of the country. Several of his predecessors had purchased the military services of the count of Flanders for annuities determinable with their lives. The contract was optional, founded on the basis of mutual convenience. But Margaret, the reigning countess, had assumed it as a right, and had demanded, before the death of the late king, the payment of a long balance of arrears, amounting to almost forty thousand marks. The claim was indignantly rejected: and the countess, regardless of the consequences either to herself or her people, seized as an indemnification all the wool of English growth in her dominions, though three fourths of it had ceased to be English property. Henry had recourse to retaliation: and by the seizure of Flemish manufactures, raised the sum of eight thousand pounds, which he divided among the sufferers in proportion to their respective losses. At the same time the king forbade the exportation of wool and wool-fells to Flanders, and invited with the offer of a premium Flemish clothiers to settle in his dominions. It was however, discovered, that through the agency of other foreigners, the prohibited articles were easily introduced into the country: and Edward, soon after the death of his father, had forbidden, un-

450 pigs, 18 wild boars, 273 fitches of bacon, and 19,660 capons and fowls. Rym. ii. 21.

CHAP.
III.

der severe penalties, the exportation of wool altogether. This measure subdued the obstinacy of Margaret. The Flemish looms remained idle: the manufacturers were reduced to poverty: the countess herself lost the most productive branch of her revenue. She now solicited an accommodation: and Edward consented to meet her son Guy at Montreuil. A deputation of merchants from London attended to aid him with their advice: the conditions prescribed by the king were accepted: and Guy submitted to offer a public apology. With the Flemish lords he was introduced to Edward, who had assembled around him his court, and the principal inhabitants of the country. "Sir," said Baldwin of Avesnes, "the count of Flanders is come before you to declare his regret, that his mother, my lady the countess, should have seized the goods of your subjects. She conceived that she had a right to make that seizure: but through respect for you, and to obtain your friendship, she promises to make full reparation to the sufferers; and for the performance of this promise the count binds himself and his possessions to you, sir king of England." Edward replied that he accepted the offer which had been made with so much humility, and the more readily, because he knew that the count was at the time in the holy land, and had always disapproved of the injurious conduct of his mother. It was agreed that the

eight thousand pounds levied on the goods of the Flemish merchants, should be admitted as a part of the reparation: and the commercial intercourse between the two countries was replaced on its ancient footing.¹⁰

From Montreuil Edward hastened to England, and was crowned at Westminster, together with his consort.¹¹ Almost two years had elapsed from the death of Henry: and yet the tranquillity of the kingdom had not been disturbed. If the survivors of the Montfort faction were disposed to rekindle the civil war, they had been overawed by the vigilance of the council, and the expected arrival of the king. Edward had now reached his thirty-sixth year. In person he was tall, but well-proportioned: the length of his arm gave additional force to his stroke; and when he was once placed on his saddle, no struggle of his horse, no violence of

Aug. 2.

Aug. 19.
King's coronation.

¹⁰ Rym. ii. 24. 32—34.

¹¹ Alexander king of Scots, in obedience to the king's summons, attended at the coronation. It had been agreed by Richard I., that as often as the Scottish kings attended the English court in consequence of a summons to that effect, they should be received and accompanied in the same manner as their predecessors had been, by the bishop, sheriff, and barons of each county during their journey, and should be paid 5*l.* per day for their expenses on the road, and thirty shillings per day as long as they remained in the king's court, with 24 loaves, four sextercies of the best, and eight of inferior wine, four wax tapers, forty better, and eighty inferior candles, two pounds of pepper, and four pounds of cinnamon. Rym. i. 87. But it appears that now they received the 5*l.* for each day during the whole time, and probably purchased their own provisions. Alexander on the present occasion was paid 175*l.* Rym. ii. 42.

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III.

the enemy could dislodge him from his seat. In temper he was warm and irascible, impatient of injury, and reckless of danger : but his anger might be disarmed by submission, and his temerity seemed to be justified by success. During the late contest with the barons, he had proved the solidity of his judgment, and the resolution of his mind : and his reputation had been established among the admirers of chivalry by his prowess in battles, in tournaments, and in his expedition to Palestine.¹² In ambition he did not yield to any of his predecessors : but his ambition aimed at a very different object. They had exhausted their strength in attempting conquests on the continent, which might be wrested from them at any time by a fortunate neighbour : he aspired to unite in himself the sovereignty of the whole island of Great Britain. Nor was he entirely disappointed. Wales was incorporated with England : and the independence of Scotland sought an asylum in the midst of morasses, forests, and mountains. 1. The subjugation of the former, 2. and the attempt to subjugate the latter, will comprise the most interesting occurrences of his reign.

Edward
subdues
the Welsh.

1. After the death of Henry, Llewellyn, like the other vassals of the English throne, had been required to swear fealty to the new monarch. During Edward's absence the refusal of the

¹² Heming. 1, 2. Trivet, 232.

Welshman had been overlooked: after his coronation the summons was thrice repeated, and as often eluded. It was not that Llewellyn denied the right of the king, or his own obligation: but a clause in the last treaty, which prohibited either party from harbouring the enemies of the other, furnished him with a plausible subject of complaint, and a claim of redress. When this pretext had been removed, he endeavoured to shelter himself under the probability of danger to his life from the malice of his enemies in England. Edward advanced to the borders of Wales and offered him a safe conduct: but he rose in his demands, and required conditions, the extravagance of which proved that they were asked only that they might be rejected. The truth was, that the prince aspired to the honour of asserting the independence of his country, and had resolved not to acknowledge a superior, unless he were compelled by the fortune of arms. At first the English prelates and barons interceded in his favour: his excuses and delays exhausted their patience: they pronounced him a rebel, and granted a fifteenth towards the expenses of the war.¹³ The winter was employed by the king in tempting the fidelity of the Welsh. David, whom, though a brother, Llewellyn had deprived of his patrimony, invited his countrymen to the standard

1277.

¹³ Rym. ii. c. 4. 41, 42. 58. 63, 69.

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- of Edward: and Rees ap Meredith, the representative of the ancient princes of South Wales, gladly fought against the chief of a rival family. Edward's military tenants assembled in the counties of Shropshire and Cheshire: at Midsummer he crossed the Dee, advanced along the coast, took and fortified the two castles of Flint and Rhuddlan obtained possession of Anglesey, and with his fleet cut off the communication between Snowdon and the sea. Llewellyn, confined to barren mountains and forests, soon felt the privations of famine: and
- Nov. 9. in a few weeks was compelled to throw himself without reserve on the mercy of his adversary. The conditions granted him were, that he should pay a fine of fifty thousand pounds, that he should cede to Edward the full possession of the four cantreds between Chester and the river Conway, should hold Anglesey in fee of the English crown by a yearly rent of one thousand marks, should do homage to the king at Rhuddlan and in London, and should deliver ten hostages for his subsequent fidelity. But these terms were prescribed only to shew the superiority of the conqueror: and Edward soon
- Nov. 11. yielded to the suggestions of his own generosity. He first remitted the fine of fifty thousand pounds, next the yearly rent for the isle of
- 1278
Sep. 19. Anglesey, then gratuitously returned the ten hostages, and lastly, consented to the marriage
- Oct. 13. of Llewellyn with Eleanor de Montfort, daugh-

ter to the late earl of Leicester, who the last year, on her passage to Wales, had been taken near Bristol, and conducted a prisoner to the king.¹⁴

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In the opinion of Edward the subjugation of Wales was now accomplished. He flattered himself that what he had begun by force, he had completed by kindness. The brothers Llewellyn and David were reconciled. To Llewellyn he had behaved rather with the affection of a friend than the severity of an enemy, and his letters to that prince breathed a spirit of moderation, which did honour to his heart. To David he had been a bounteous protector. He had granted him the honour of knighthood, extensive estates in both countries, and the hand of Eleanor, daughter to the earl Ferrers. But he had formed a false estimate of the Welsh character at that period. Hatred of the English had been bequeathed to the natives as a sacred legacy by their fathers through many generations: nor was there an individual, from the prince to the peasant, who was not ready at any time to draw the sword for the independence of his country. The inhabitants of the districts which had recently been ceded to England, were the first to manifest their discontent. They beheld with grief the gradual extinction of their national usages,

Their dis-
content.

¹⁴ Rym. ii. 88—92. 97. 116. 119. 125. Hem. i. 5. Triv. 147, 148. 251.

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the distribution of the cantreds into hundreds and shires, and the introduction of English laws, and English judicatures. David, with all his obligations to Edward, appeared dissatisfied. His timber had been felled by the king's orders, to open a road through one of his forests: and some of his vassals had been executed by the justiciary for murder, though they had offered the ransom for their lives allowed by the Welsh laws. Even Llewellyn had, or pretended to have, causes of complaint against the encroachments of the royal officers. Though Edward had promised him justice, his mind was exasperated, and he lent a willing ear to the inflammatory suggestions of David. Men of irritable passions seldom weigh the consequences against the pleasure of revenge; but on the present occasion their hopes were invigorated by a foolish confidence in an ancient prediction attributed to Merlin, that when the English money should become circular, the prince of Wales should be crowned in London. Edward had lately issued a new coinage of round half-pennies and farthings, and had forbidden the penny to be any longer divided into halves and quarters. Hence it was wisely concluded that the prediction of the prophet was on the point of being accomplished.¹⁵

They re-
bel.

1282.
March 22.

On Palm Sunday, in the darkness of the night, and amid the howling of a storm, the faithless

¹⁵ Duns. 471. Wikes, 108. Waverley, 235. Triv. 273.

David surprised the strong castle of Hawarden. Roger Clifford the justiciary was found in his bed, was wounded, and carried a captive to the summit of Snowdon; his knights, esquires, and valets were all put to the sword. This was the signal of a general insurrection. Llewellyn immediately joined his brother, and besieged the castles of Flint and Rhuddlan: the different chieftains assembled their families and dependants; and the Welsh poured from their mountains into the marches, laid the country waste with fire and sword, and inflicted on the inhabitants, without distinction of age or sex, every misery that the ferocity of savages could suggest.¹⁶ Edward at first refused to believe the intelligence; repeated messages convinced his incredulity, and a strong force was dispatched to raise the siege of the two castles. The urgency of the case required the most energetic measures. A forced loan supplied the deficiency of the treasury;¹⁷ the courts of king's bench and the exchequer were removed to Shrewsbury; and Edward unfurled the royal standard at Worcester. He reduced the castle of Hope belonging to David, and issued new orders for his military tenants, and one thousand pioneers to meet

May 17.

¹⁶ Rym. 89. 96—107. Duns. 471. Waver. 410.

¹⁷ The loan was raised on the corporate bodies civil and religious, and on individuals known to possess money. It was never repaid: but the lenders were exempted from the next subsidy granted by parliament. Duns. 476, 477.

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Aug. 8.

him at Rhuddlan.¹⁸ The particulars of the campaign are but imperfectly recorded. The Welsh had added artificial to the natural defences of their mountains; the king either could not or would not attempt to force their position: and the loss of fourteen bannerets, acknowledged by the English, proves that this dilatory system of warfare was as destructive as the most bloody battle. Edward reduced Anglesey: but the advantage was balanced by a severe disaster. A bridge of boats had been hastily thrown across the Menai, and a numerous force passed from the island to observe the intrenchments of the enemy. As they incautiously ascended the hill, a party of Welshmen suddenly started from a place of concealment. Their appearance and shouts intimidated the English, who fled in confusion to the beach: but the tide had divided the bridge, and the fugitives poured in such numbers into the boats that they sank, and almost the whole party was lost.¹⁹

Nov. 6.

Death of
Llewellyn.

The archbishop of Canterbury had visited Llewellyn; and if the Welsh prince had listened to the advice of the prelate, he might have averted his own fate, and that of his country. But success had confirmed his obstinacy: he refused the

¹⁸ Each pioneer was to be furnished with a strong axe or hatchet, and to receive threepence per day. Rym. ii. 207.

¹⁹ Walsing. 51. Heming. i. 9. Dunst. 473. The bridge was so broad that forty armed men could march over it abreast of each other.

terms that were offered ; and trusted to the severity of the winter for the dissolution of the invading army. Edward had ordered a strong force to assemble in the vicinity of Carmarthen : and Llewellyn, leaving the defence of Snowdun to his brother, hastened to Bluit in Radnorshire. The English under Edmund Mortimer and John Giffard appeared on the left bank of the Wye. The bridge was in the possession of the natives ; and a numerous force, posted on a neighbouring mountain, awaited the orders of Llewellyn, who, having descended the hill to observe the motions of the enemy, had for repose or shelter entered a barn. He was startled by a sudden shout, but was told by his esquire that it proceeded from the guard at the bridge, which had succeeded in repulsing the enemy. In a few minutes the banners of Mortimer (he had passed the river by a ford) were seen ascending the hill, and Adam Frankton, a knight, accidentally approached the barn. The prince, though without armour and on foot, did not shun the unequal combat. He received the spear of his antagonist in the side : and Frankton, heedless of the quality of the slain, hastened to rejoin the army. The Welsh expected with impatience the return of their prince : the suspicion of his death threw them into despair ; and two thousand are said to have fallen by the swords of the assailants. After the battle Frankton returned to examine the individual whom he had slain. It was discovered

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Dec. 6.

Dec. 11.

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to be Llewellyn; and on his person were found his private signet, and a mysterious list of feigned names, supposed to designate certain traitors in the English army. His head was forwarded to Edward at Rhuddlan, who commanded it to be sent to London and fixed on the Tower. To verify or ridicule the prediction of Merlin, it was encircled with a wreath of silver or ivy.²⁰

And of
David his
brother.

1283.

June 21.

The independence of Wales expired with Llewellyn. As soon as his death was known, the other chieftains hastened to make their submission, and were received with kindness by the policy of Edward. David alone held back. He hesitated to throw himself into the hands of the man whom he had so cruelly offended, and resolved to trust for safety to his own fortune and ingenuity. His castle of Bere, situated in the centre of a morass, was deemed almost impregnable: but he preferred the asylum offered by the mountains and forests, and during six months eluded the vigilance and pursuit of his enemies. But no retreat could secure him from the perfidy of his own countrymen. They hunted him from rock to rock, made him prisoner with his wife and children, and conducted him in chains to the castle of Rhuddlan. It was in vain that he solicited permission to cast himself at the feet of the conqueror. Edward had resolved not to forgive: but dared not expose his resolution to

²⁰ Rym ii. 223—225. Heming. 1. 11, 12. West. 411. Wals. 50. Knyghton, 1465.

the proof of an interview. For the trial of the unfortunate prince a parliament was called at Shrewsbury, and the language of the summons fully disclosed the feelings and object of the king. It described the hostility and restlessness of the Welsh, their repeated infraction of treaties, their sanguinary and destructive incursions, charges which perhaps with equal truth might have been urged against their accusers : and then painted in strong colours the ingratitude of David, who, an orphan and exile, had found in the king a parent and protector, had received from him possessions and retainers, and had been raised by him to the first dignities in his court.²¹

The Welsh prince was arraigned before the peers, eleven earls, and one hundred barons, and was unanimously adjudged “ to be drawn to the gallows as a traitor to the king who had made him a knight ; to be hanged as the murderer of the gentlemen taken in the castle of Hawarden ; to have his bowels burnt, because he had profaned by assassination the solemnity of Christ’s passion ; and to have his quarters dispersed through the country, because he had in different places compassed the death of his lord the king.” This sentence, which for centuries has been the legal sentence in cases of high treason, was literally carried into execution.²² The fate

²¹ Rym. ii. 217.

²² Dunst. 475. Heming. 1. 13. The tragedy was terminated by a ridiculous dispute between the citizens of Winchester and York, for the possession of the right shoulder of

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III.Pacifica-
tion of
Wales.

of David, considered only as the champion of his country's independence, may excite our pity: but that pity will soon be checked by the recollection of his perfidy, ingratitude, and crimes.

Edward spent more than a year in Wales, or near the borders, that he might secure the permanency of his conquest. To coerce the inhabitants of Snowdon, the most intractable of the natives, he fortified the castles of Conway and Carnarvon, and distributed the lands around them among the most powerful of the English barons. But his great object was to conciliate and civilize. The stern features of an enemy subsided into the milder aspect of a legislator, who avoided whatever might unnecessarily shock the prejudices of his new subjects, offered his peace and protection to all without distinction, and allowed them to retain their lands, subject to the same services by which they had been held of their native princes. At the same time, to allure them from the roving manner of life to which they had been accustomed, he established corporate bodies of merchants in the principal towns; and to restrain their habits of violence and bloodshed, introduced the jurisprudence of the English courts, divided the country into shires and hundreds, and issued new forms of writs adapted to the Welsh man-

the prince. It was in reality a point of precedency, and decided by the council in favour of Winchester. Waver. 238.

ners and tenures.²³ It might be the effect of policy, it was more probably owing to the king's stay in the country, that in the castle of Carnarvon, Eleanor was delivered of her son Edward. The natives claimed the child as their countryman: and when he was afterwards declared prince of Wales, joyfully hailed the event, as if it had proclaimed the restoration of their independence.²⁴

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Birth of
the prince
of Wales.
1284.
April 25.

From the final pacification of Wales to the commencement of the troubles in Scotland, elapsed an interval of four years, one of which was spent by Edward in England in legislating for his own subjects, the rest on the continent in the difficult but honourable office of arbitrator between the kings of France, Arragon, and Sicily. Charles of Anjou had been for some years in the peaceable possession of Sicily; it was stolen from him by the cunning of Peter the king of Arragon. That prince had pretended to undertake a crusade against the infidels, and sailed to the neighbourhood of Tunis: at the

The king
is media-
tor be-
tween fo-
reign
princes.

²³ See the *statutum Wallie*, published in the tenth volume of the *Statutes at large*, App. p. 3. From it we learn that the ancient laws of Wales bore very hard upon females. No dower was allowed to widows, nor could daughters succeed to the lands of their fathers. On the first of these heads the king introduced the custom of England; on the second he allowed the lands to be divided as formerly among the sons, but excepted bastards from the division, and determined that in failure of male issue the inheritance should descend to the females. *Ibid.* p. 11.

²⁴ Wals. 52. Trivet, 261. I know nothing of the massacre of the bards, a fiction to which we owe Gray's celebrated ode.

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instigation of those who were in the secret, the Sicilians suddenly rose and murdered every Frenchman in the five cities of the island: and the king of Arragon ascended without opposition the throne of Sicily. It was a bold and dangerous measure. Whatever might be the griefs of the natives, the blood of eight thousand fellow-creatures fixed an indelible stain on their cause, and that of their new monarch: the pope, who claimed both Sicily and Arragon as fiefs of his see, excommunicated the assassins and their protector: Charles, who still retained the south of Italy, invited to his standard adventurers from every country: and Philip of France, accepting from the pontiff the donation of Arragon for his younger son, entered Catalonia with an army of seventy thousand men. The fortune or abilities of Peter were a match for all his enemies. The papal sentence he set at nought: he committed the defence of Sicily to Doria, who destroyed the French fleet, and made prisoner the prince of Salerno, the son of Charles of Anjou; and he compelled Philip, after wasting his forces among the Pyrenees, to retire precipitately into France. While the greater part of Europe was thus convulsed by the ambition of these princes, the same year consigned them all to the tranquillity of the grave. Philip III. left his crown to his son Philip IV., a youth in his seventeenth year: Peter was succeeded in Arragon by his son Al-

phonso, in Sicily by his son James: the prince of Salerno, the heir to the pretensions of the house of Anjou, was still a captive in the possession of the latter. The French regency invited Edward to assume the office of mediator: nor was it difficult to reconcile Philip and Alphonso, who had not inherited the irritation of their fathers. First an armistice, afterwards a peace was concluded by the good offices of the king of England. To obtain the freedom of the prince of Salerno was a more arduous task, and cost Edward several journeys, and repeated negotiations. It was at last effected, but on conditions which secured to James the undisputed possession of his kingdom. Charles, however, when he had obtained his liberty, eluded every obligation, was crowned king of the two Sicilies, and sought to remove his rival by force of arms. The issue of the contest might have been doubtful: but, by the death of Alphonso, James succeeded to the throne of Arragon, and with the united power of the two kingdoms was able to defeat all the efforts of the house of Anjou.²⁵

While Edward was thus employed in the concerns of foreign states, the people of England complained that he neglected the interests of his own kingdom. The refusal of a supply by the parliament admonished him to return: and he soon found in the unfortunate situation of

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1236.

July 25.

1238.
Oct. 27.

Succession
to the
throne of
Scotland.
1239.
Aug. 12.

²⁵ See the tedious negotiations on these subjects in Rymer, tom. ii. from p. 317 to 470.

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1286.
Mar. 16.

1289.
Nov. 6.

Scotland an ample field for the exercise of his policy and ambition. His sister Margaret had been dead fifteen years. She had borne her husband the king of Scotland two sons, Alexander and David, and a daughter, Margaret, married to Eric king of Norway: and Alexander consoled his widowhood with the expectation of transmitting the crown to his lineal descendants. But in 1281 David died: three years later Margaret, and within twelve months after Margaret, the young Alexander sunk into the grave. The afflicted father, at the request of his nobility, consented to take a second wife: and soon after his marriage with Jolette, the daughter of the count of Dreux, was accidentally killed by a fall from his horse. The crown of course devolved to his grandchild, an infant, a female, and a foreigner, Margaret, the daughter of the king of Norway, about three years of age. Before the death of Alexander she had been declared heir apparent: her right was now acknowledged by the states of the kingdom; and a council of regency was appointed to execute in her name the duties of royalty. Eric, anxious for the interests of his daughter, solicited in her favour the protection of Edward, who, soon after his return to England, wrote to the prelates, nobles, and commonalty of Scotland, requiring them to obey the government of the regents, and announcing that he should send a deputation from his council to inquire into the actual

state of the kingdom. On the same day was signed the treaty of Salisbury, by the deputies of England Scotland, and Norway. It was agreed that Eric should send his daughter to Britain, free from every matrimonial engagement: that Edward should deliver her in the same state to the Scots, whenever Scotland should be restored to tranquillity, and security should be given that they “ would not marry “ her but according to the ordinance, will, and “ advice of the king of England, and with the “ assent of the king of Norway:” that all matters relating to the state and reformation of the kingdom should be referred to a council of English, Scottish, and Norwegian commissioners: and that whenever any difference of opinion arose between the latter, the decision should depend on the judgment of the English.²⁶ But the great object of Edward was to marry the young queen to his eldest son. The consent of her father was easily obtained: the pope granted the necessary dispensation; and the Scottish parliament was induced by the king’s agents to make the first official proposal. In the treaty of marriage the liberties and independence of Scotland were secured with the most scrupulous jealousy: but an article was added, providing that none of its conditions should be explained to the prejudice of the rights previously belonging to either crown.²⁷ This prospect, however,

1290.
Mar. 18.

July 18.

²⁶ Rym.ii. 445, 446.

²⁷ The Scots were aware of the pretensions of the English kings to

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Oct. 7.

so flattering to the hopes, so essential to the prosperity of both kingdoms, was speedily closed. The maid of Norway (so she was called) was of too delicate a constitution to bear the fatigues of the voyage, and was compelled to land in one of the Orkneys; where she sickened and recovered, relapsed, and died. Her death was to her subjects the source of numerous calamities: and the revolutions which followed served to convert the ancient rivalry between England and Scotland into the bitterest and most lasting animosity.²³

Thirteen
competi-
tors.

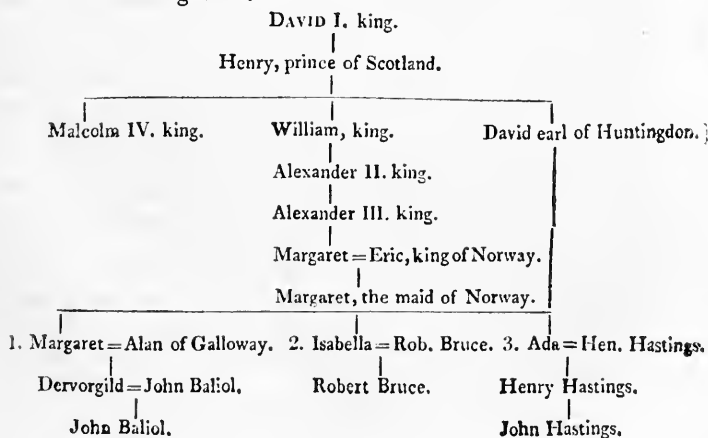
By the demise of Margaret the posterity of the three last kings of Scotland, William, Alexander II. and Alexander III., had become extinct: and no fewer than thirteen claimants appeared, who, with one exception, founded their pretensions to the crown on their legitimate or spurious descent from the royal family. Of these one derived his right from an usurper, six

the feudal superiority over the crown of Scotland: and to satisfy their jealousy, it was agreed that the rights, laws, liberties, and customs of Scotland should be inviolably observed: that the kingdom should remain separate, divided, free, and without subjection; and in the event of the death of either party without issue, should be restored to the right heir, wholly, freely, absolutely and without any subjection. At the same time, however, Edward inserted three clauses, which "saved to him and all others the rights belonging to him or them before the date of the treaty, or which ought to be long afterwards: so that by the treaty itself nothing could either be acquired or lost by the king of England, his heirs, or any one else." Rym. ii. 482. These clauses placed the claims of the two crowns on their original footing.

²³ Rym. ii. 445. 471—474. 482—489. 1090, 1091.

from illegitimate children, and two from a sister of William the lion. Erie king of Norway, demanded to be considered as heir to his daughter the deceased queen. In disposing of these ten claims there could be little difficulty: the true heir was to be sought among the descendants of David earl of Huntingdon, the brother of king William. From Margaret the eldest of his daughters was sprung John Baliol lord of Galloway, from Isabella the second, Robert Bruce lord of Annandale, and from Ada the third, John Hastings lord of Abergavenny. The latter, while the posterity of the other sisters was living, could only pretend to a share in the succession, if it were divisible: nor could Bruce have opposed the claim of Baliol, the descendant of the elder sister, had he not been the grandson, while Baliol was only the great grandson of David.²⁹ The

²⁹ The claims of these three competitors will be best understood from the following table :



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point therefore to be decided was, whether the crown belonged of right to the representative of the elder daughter, though more remote by one degree, or to the representative of the second daughter, because he was nearer by one degree. At the present day it would not bear a dispute: but in that age the law of descents was not uniformly observed, and in many cases power had as much influence as justice in determining the succession. The prospect of the evils to which Scotland was exposed from the competition of so many claimants, appalled every well-wisher to his country: and the states wisely determined to refer the controversy to the king of England, as a judge whose equity had been acknowledged by the greatest princes in Europe, and whose power was equal to the task of enforcing obedience to his decision.³⁰

Edward
claims the
superiority.

By Edward the office was willingly accepted; not, however, as an appointment emanating from the election of others, but as a right inherent in his own crown. The cognizance of the cause belonged to him, so he pretended, because he was the superior lord of Scotland, whose kings reigned as his vassals. The Scottish writers have warmly inveighed against the ambition of the prince, who thus attempted to impose on their country the chain of feudal subjection: but their invectives appear to be grounded less on

³⁰ Heming. 30.

sound reasoning than in national partiality. It is certain that for almost four centuries the kings of England had been accustomed to receive the homage and fealty of the kings of Scotland. The object, indeed, of that homage was a matter of controversy. The former claimed it for the crown of Scotland: the latter pretended to render it for lands held under the crown of England.³¹ Both were equally obstinate: and gene-

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³¹ On this question, which was so fiercely debated a century ago, and has now subsided into a mere historical problem, I may be allowed to make a few observations.—1. If the reader turn back to the preceding pages (vol. i. p. 278, not. 54. p. 288, not. 71. 75. p. 302, not. 91. p. 304, not. 94. p. 323. p. 331.) he will, I think, find sufficient reason to believe on the testimony of contemporary or almost contemporary writers, that the princes with the people of the Scots were repeatedly compelled to own themselves the vassals of the Anglo-Saxon kings, and that too, before they held any lands of the English crown.—2. If we may believe historians, who lived at the time, and could not be ignorant of the real fact, Malcolm did homage for his crown to William the conqueror (Hist. ii. 52. not 70) and also to his successor William Rufus (Ibid. 124). But when he was required to appear before William's court, he replied that the kings of Scotland were accustomed to do right to the kings of England only on the borders, and in a court composed of the barons of both realms. (Ibid. 125.)—3. Under Henry I. the royal families of the two kingdoms became allied by intermarriages. David king of Scotland, was frequently in England, did homage to Henry, and assisted at different great councils as the first of the peers. Later Scottish writers maintain that he did this as earl of Huntingdon, English writers that he did it as king of Scotland.—4. During the civil wars between Stephen and Matilda he seized the three northern counties, and added them to his dominions. But his successor Malcolm was compelled to restore them to Henry II. He did homage, and accompanied his lord, the king of England, in his expedition into France. William succeeded Malcolm, and also did homage, but joining Henry's

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rally, to avoid an appeal to the sword, the homage was performed and accepted with mutual reservations, which saved to each party his respective rights. When William the lion became the captive of Henry II. he was compelled to purchase his liberty by an acknowledgment, given under his seal and the seals of the Scottish prelates and barons, that he held his kingdom as a fief under the king of England: but the poverty of Richard induced him to return this concession to that prince for the sum of ten thousand marks, and to replace the rights of each crown on their original footing.³² His succes-

sions in their rebellion, was made prisoner. Henry extorted from him a new oath of allegiance, in which he became the vassal of the English crown against all manner of men whomsoever, according to the new forms invented by the feudal lawyers. There can be no doubt that he did homage for his kingdom (Hist. ii. 396).—5. From this last acknowledgment he purchased a release of Richard I., and thus replaced the question on its ancient footing (Ibid. 443. not. 5). But John, Henry, and Edward, still required homage from him and his successors, as kings of Scotland: and *they*, though they did homage, yet contrived to do it in such manner as to be able to assert that they had not done it for their crown (Hist. iii. 29. 119. 121. 123).—6. Hence the real fact in my opinion is, that the Scots, as the weaker people, were on many occasions compelled to submit to their more powerful neighbours: that their kings often did homage for their crowns, and as often took the advantage of a disputed succession, or a civil war, to reassert their independence: and that, while the kings of England on the one part constantly advanced their claim of superiority, the kings of Scotland on the other were careful to elude or deny it, as often as they durst.

³² In the original charter, Richard requires that William nobis faciat integre et plenarie quicquid rex Scotiæ Malcolmus frater ejus antecessoribus nostris de jure fecit et de jure facere debuit. Rym.

sors, John and Henry III. not only asserted, but if we may believe the latter, actually enforced their claim, and received homage for the Scottish crown from William, Alexander II., and Alexander III. When Edward ascended the throne, the dispute had been revived. For four years Alexander resisted: at last he offered to do homage simply and without any condition. The proposal was accepted: and the Scottish king on his knees, and in the presence of the English prelates and barons, said: "I, Alexander, king of Scotland, become the liege man of the lord Edward, king of England, against all men." "And I," replied Edward, "receive you as such, saving the claim and right which I and my successors have to the homage of you and your successors for the kingdom of Scotland, when we shall choose to require it."³³ To the Scots therefore the demand of Edward on the present occasion could not be new or unexpected. He asked no more than what he and his predecessors had maintained to be their right. He might perhaps have displayed more generosity, if he had waived his claim, till the throne of Scotland had a prince to support its pretensions: but he is not to be condemned

i. 64. In the copy transmitted to us by Fordun, after antecessoribus nostris are interpolated the words pro terris suis in Anglia. Ford. Scotichr. i. 501. It is certain that the homage was performed long before the Scottish kings possessed any lands in England.

³³ Rym. ii. 126.

CHAP. of injustice, because he seized the most favour-
 III. able moment for the exercise of a prerogative,
 which he was convinced belonged to his crown.

Scots ac-
 knowledge
 his superi-
 ority.

1291.
 May 10.

May 11.

The king, by circular letters, had announced his pretensions to the prelates, barons, and commonalty of Scotland, and summoned them to meet him at Norham on the borders of the two kingdoms. Edward took up his residence in the castle, attended by his barons of the northern counties: the Scots assembled at Upsetlington, on the opposite bank of the Tweed. On the appointed day, in the church of Norham, Brabazon, the English justiciary, addressed the states of Scotland on the part of the king, informing them that Edward was come to decide the great cause of the succession to their crown: that he wished to avail himself of their knowledge and advice: and that as a preliminary he required them to acknowledge him for their feudal and direct superior. The next day was assigned for their answer: when they requested a further delay, that they might be able to consult those prelates and barons, who had not yet arrived. The request was granted: an instrument, containing the proofs of the alleged superiority of the English kings, was delivered into their hands, and they were required to produce their objections, if they had any, on the first day of June, when Edward would be ready to do them justice.³⁴ The first of June passed, nor was any

³⁴ The time allotted was three weeks, reckoning from the tenth

CHAP.
III.

June 2.

counter-plea put in on the part of the Scots: on the second the bishop of Bath, the chancellor, crossed the Tweed to Upsetlington, recapitulated the previous proceedings, and added, that since the king's claim had not been opposed, Edward would proceed to exercise it by hearing and determining the cause. He therefore called on Robert Bruce to say, whether he were ready to abide by the decision of the king of England as sovereign lord of Scotland. Bruce (and it is worthy of remark that Bruce was the first) replied in the affirmative. The same question was then put to the other competitors present, and from all the same answer was received. Baliol, however, did not appear. Perhaps he was unwilling to acquiesce in the degradation of the Scottish crown: perhaps he courted popularity by an affected delay. When on the following morning he was asked the same question, he hesitated, retired to consult his friends, and returning at last gave a full, but apparently a reluctant, assent. The assembly proceeded immediately to the church of Norham, where they were joined by Edward. The chancellor, in a set speech, asserted the king's claim, and declared his intention to do strict justice to each of the competitors: Edward repeated the same thing in nearly the same words: and the differ-

June 3.

of May, and consequently ending on the last day of May. Some mistakes have arisen from the supposition that it ended on the 1st of June. Rym. ii. 544.

CHAP.
III.

ent claimants publicly signed an instrument, in which they professed themselves willing to receive judgment from the king, in virtue of his right as superior lord. It was unanimously resolved that each suitor should in the first instance exhibit his proofs before a council, consisting of forty Scots, named by Baliol and Comyn, of forty others selected by Bruce, and of twenty-four Englishmen, to be appointed by Edward. All the parties agreed that this council should hold its sittings at Berwick: but as they differed with respect to the time, the king interposed, and fixed the first session for the second of August. In the mean time, that he might be enabled to put his judgment in execution, the regents and wardens of the royal castles resigned their respective charges into his hands, and all the military tenants of the Scottish crown swore fealty to him as superior lord of Scotland.³⁵

Claims of
Baliol and
Bruce.

In the beginning of the next year Edward sent his envoys, John of St. John and Roger L'Estrange to Rome, to obtain from Nicholas IV. a confirmation of the recognition which had been made by the competitors, that the Scottish crown was dependant on that of England. The pontiff, having consulted the cardinals, returned a civil but positive refusal. He was anxious, he said, to comply with the royal wishes, as far as his conscience would permit him: but the supe-

1292.
March 1.

³⁵ Rym. ii. 512—580.

CHAP.
III.

riority of Edward was a delicate and dangerous question, which might lead to many serious evils, and which involved the interests of numbers both among the clergy and laity. Neither could he approve of any measure, which might injure the rights of individuals, and in particular "that right which the Roman church itself possessed in the kingdom of Scotland."³⁶ This check did not arrest the ambition of Edward, who at the appointed time hastened to Berwick to receive the report of the council. But its members, divided by party views or personal interests, and confounded by the number of the competitors and the multiplicity of the pleadings, had come to no determination. To abridge the proceedings, he ordered them to confine their attention in the first place to the cases of Baliol and Bruce; and when they had disposed of the claims of these, to revert to those of the other suitors. After an interval of four months the delegates appeared before the king in a parliament of both nations at the same place, and in answer to their petition for instructions, were told that the succession to the crown was regulated by the same laws as the succession to earldoms, baronies, and all other impartible tenures. Baliol and Bruce now appeared before them. The latter maintained that with regard to the in-

JUNE 2.

OCT. 14.

³⁶ *Nolentes quoque aliquorum juri, et specialiter juri quod in regno ipso Romana habet ecclesia, derogari. Apud Raynald, ii. 456.*

CHAP.
III.

heritance of subjects, the first born might be preferred to others : but that in the succession to a kingdom, an impartible inheritance, the prerogative of primogeniture must by the law of nature yield to proximity of blood : that he was a degree nearer than Baliol to David their common ancestor : that Dervorgild, Baliol's mother, who had resigned her right to her son, was indeed in the same degree with himself, but that, when the proximity of blood was equal, the male was always preferred to the female. Baliol urged on the contrary, that by the law and custom both of England and Scotland, whenever the inheritance was indivisible, it descended to all the heirs of the elder branch, before it could devolve on any one of the younger branch : and therefore since he was sprung from Margaret the elder sister, and Bruce from Isabella the younger, his claim was preferable to that of his competitor.³⁷

Baliol declared king.

Nov. 6.

The delegates now made their report, and Edward laid it before the united parliament of the two nations. To simplify the subject, the abstract question was asked, whether the crown descended in the order of birth, or was hereditary by proximity of blood. The answer was unanimously in favour of primogeniture, a decision fatal to the pretensions of Bruce. Two of the competitors, Comyn and Mandeville, had

³⁷ Rym. 531—536.

never prosecuted their claims : the arguments of the remaining eight occupied the eleven following days : and on the seventeenth of November, after an inquiry which had lasted eighteen months, judgment was given in the name of the king, by the advice and with the consent of the prelates, barons, and commonalties of both realms. By the retreat or non-appearance of the others the suitors were now reduced to three, Baliol, Bruce, and Hastings, of whom the two latter had united to demand a partition of the kingdom, on the ground that the inheritance of David ought to be divided among the descendants of his three daughters. But it was decided that the kingdom with its escheats was indivisible : and that, therefore, John of Baliol, the heir of David by his eldest daughter, should recover and have seizin of it and of all its appurtenances.³⁸ The regency was dissolved, the royal castles were delivered to Baliol, and that prince swore fealty to Edward in these words ; “Hear you
“this, my lord Edward, king of England, and
“sovereign lord of the realm of Scotland, that
“I, John of Baliol, king of Scotland, do fealty
“to you for the realm of Scotland, which I hold,
“and claim to hold of you : that I will be faithful and loyal to you, and faith and loyalty will
“bear you of life and limb, and worldly honour,
“against all men that may live and die : and

CHAP
III.

Nov. 17.

Nov. 19.

He swears
fealty.

Nov. 20

³⁸ Id. 586—590.

CHAP.
III.

And does
homage.
Dec. 26.

“loyally I will acknowledge, and loyally
“perform the services that are due to you for
“the aforesaid kingdom of Scotland. So help
“me God and these holy gospels.” Five weeks
later he was summoned to do homage at New-
castle, where the ceremony was performed in the
usual manner and with these words: “My lord,
“sir Edward king of England, sovereign lord
“of the realm of Scotland, I, John of Baliol,
“king of Scotland, become your liege man for
“the kingdom of Scotland and all its appurte-
“nances and appendages, which kingdom I hold,
“and ought of right, and claim to hold by in-
“heritance for myself and my heirs kings of
“Scotland, of you and your heirs, kings of
“England. And faith and loyalty I will bear to
“you and your heirs, kings of England, of life
“and limb, and earthly honour, against all men
“that may live and die.”³⁹ Thus ended this
memorable controversy, in which the king, what-
ever may be thought of his own pretensions,
evinced the most laudable anxiety to do justice
to the different competitors, and ultimately ad-
judged the crown to that claimant who was un-
doubtedly the true heir.

Appeals
from Ba-
liol to Ed-
ward.

Baliol, to obtain a crown, had consented to wear it as a vassal. He soon felt the consequences of vassalage, and was taught by a succession of petty indignities to regret the more humble station from which he had risen. Every

³⁹ Rym. ii. 590—595.

suitors in his courts, who were dissatisfied with the decision of the king, could appeal to the equity of the superior lord : Edward declared it to be his duty to administer justice with impartiality to the lowest as well as to the highest of his vassals : and the king of Scotland within the first year of his reign was served with no fewer than four citations to answer in the court of the king of England, and prove the legality of his judgments.⁴⁰ It is difficult to reconcile such proceedings with the usual policy of Edward. He could not be ignorant that the Scots bore his superiority with impatience : nor was it possible to doubt that by its frequent exercise he must add to their dissatisfaction, and provoke their resistance. We may, however, safely acquit him of the design imputed to him, of humbling Baliol by a system of studied degradation. Such

⁴⁰ Id. ii. 605, 606. 608. 615. With the advice of his parliament Edward resolved, that in all cases of appeal, if the king of Scots did not answer on the second summons, he should lose the cognizance of the principal cause, and be amerced at the royal pleasure : that if he were convicted of unjustly dispossessing others of their lands, he should be amerced, and the lands restored to their rightful owners, who during their own lives, and the lives of Edward and Baliol, should hold them of the English crown : and that for false judgment or imprisonment he should be amerced, and liable to pay damages. Rot. Parl. i. 110. The very introduction of these regulations proves that hitherto appeals from the judgment of the Scottish king were unknown in the English courts. But Edward was determined to attach to his superiority all those rights, which as duke of Guienne he had been compelled to acknowledge in the crown of France.

CHAP.
III.

appeals were now grown common, wherever the feudal jurisprudence prevailed. Edward himself, as duke of Aquitaine, had frequently been summoned to repel the charges of his vassals, or to accept of wager of battle in the court of the king of France: nor could the royal justiciaries have safely rejected the prayer of the appellants when it was made in due form of law. In every other respect the conduct of Edward to Baliol was honourable and kind. He faithfully restored to him every fortress in Scotland: he declared by a public instrument, that in the case of minority the king of England had no right to the wardship or marriage of the heir to the Scottish crown: and on every occasion granted with cheerfulness the just claims advanced, or the favours requested by his royal vassal.

Baliol objects to them.

1293.

The only appeal which could give uneasiness to the new king, was brought by Maeduff, the son of Malcolm earl of Fife. During the Scottish interregnum, the regents, by the command of the king of England had heard his claim, and adjudged to him the possession of the lands of Reres and Crey. Baliol, however, by the advice of his council, and on the ground that these estates ought to remain in the hands of the king during the minority of another claimant, cast Maeduff into prison, and reversed the judgment of the regents: a proceeding which was certainly injudicious, as it bore the appear-

ance of an insult to Edward, under whose authority the former decision had been pronounced.⁴¹ Macduff appealed to the equity of their common lord: and Baliol was summoned to answer his complaint in the king's court in Trinity term. The first summons he disregarded: and a second was delivered to him in the castle of Stirling by the sheriff of Northumberland, citing him to answer not only to the appeal of Macduff, but for his contempt of Edward's authority.⁴² Here, however, it should be observed, that his personal attendance was not required: both the plaintiff and the defendant might in such cases appear, if they thought proper, by their respective attorneys.⁴³ But Baliol, with the view, as it seems, of objecting to the practice of appeals altogether, attended on the appointed day, and as soon as the complaint of Macduff had been read,⁴⁴ arose, disclaimed all intended contempt of his superior lord, and maintained that he was not bound to answer the appellant. The court decided against him, and Macduff prayed judgment in his own favour. Edward observed to Baliol, that he had sworn fealty, and done homage to the Eng-

Aug. 2.

Sept. 30.

⁴¹ Rym. ii. 590. 593. 602. 619. 635.⁴² Id. ii. 601. 606.⁴³ Habeant attornatum secundum consuetudinem curiæ Anglicanæ, si sibi viderint expedire. Rot. Parl. i. 110.⁴⁴ Macduff laid the damages for false imprisonment at 700 marks; those for contempt of Edward's authority at 10,000. Rot. Parl. i. 112.

CHAP.
III.

lish crown, that he had been lawfully summoned before the court of his superior lord, and that he was bound to answer, or to shew cause why he ought not. The king of Scots replied: that it was a matter which regarded the rights of his crown, and in which he did not dare to answer without the advice of the good men of his realm. When it was observed that he might have time to consult them, he replied that he would not ask either for time or adjournment. Edward now required the advice of the prelates, lords, and judges forming his council, by whom it was resolved, that Baliol had offered no defence: that the cognizance of the principal cause had devolved to the king of England: that Maeduff in compensation for his imprisonment should recover damages to be taxed by the court: that the king of Scots by refusing to answer, though he had formerly submitted his right to the succession to the decision of his superior lord, had committed a manifest contempt and disobedience: and that until he made satisfaction for such contempt and disobedience, three of his castles in Scotland, with their royalties, should be sequestrated in the king's hands. But before this judgment was pronounced, Baliol addressed Edward in the following manner: "Sir, I am your liege man
" for the realm of Scotland: and, as the present
" matter concerns my subjects as well as my-
" self, I pray you to forbear, till I consult them,

“ that I may not be surprised for want of advice. “ At your next parliament after Easter, I will “ answer according to their counsel, and will “ do to you whatever I ought to do.”⁴⁵ The request was immediately granted: nor did Edward appear to retain any resentment against him for his preceding conduct. His claim to the honours and lands of Tynedale, Penrith, and Sowerby, with a third part of the honour of Huntingdon, was allowed: and he was generously exempted from the payment of the relief due for the estates of his mother Dervorgild, which amounted to three thousand pounds. As to the cause between him and Macduff, it was never decided. Baliol obtained adjournment after adjournment, till the war ensued, which deprived him of his kingdom.

Oct. 29.

While Edward thus exercised his newly acquired superiority over his vassal the king of Scots, he was doomed to experience, as duke of Aquitaine, similar mortifications from the superior jurisdiction of his lord the king of

Quarrel
with
France.

⁴⁵ Rot. Parl. i. 113. Ryley, 160—165. In cases of contempt and disobedience the usual judgment was to seize the lands of the defendant, and commit him to prison at the king's pleasure. After a certain time he was allowed to obtain his liberty on the payment of an arbitrary fine. Rot. Parl. i. 70. 77. But often, before the judgment was pronounced, the defendant solicited the king's favour, and obtained either a delay, or a cessation of the proceedings against him. On such occasions he generally submitted himself to the king's pleasure without reserve (*de alto et basso*): and paid any fine that might be demanded. See the case of the archbishop of York. Rot. Parl. i. 101.

CHAP.
III.

France. The pretended offence, for which that monarch deprived him of Gascony, grew out of a private dispute between two sailors at a watering place on the French coast. An Englishman and a Norman met by accident, quarrelled and fought. The Norman fell : the Englishman was rescued by his shipmates ; and the Norman sailors, to revenge the death of their countryman, boarded the first English vessel which they met, took out a passenger, a merchant from Bayonne, and hanged him with a dog at his heels from the head of their mast. Retaliation followed : the mariners of each country took part in the quarrel : the Normans called to their assistance the sailors of France and Genoa ; the English associated with those of Ireland and Gascony : and the seas were covered with hostile squadrons, which, without any commission from their sovereigns, made war on each other, and under the influence of passion perpetrated outrages unknown to legitimate hostility. A Norman fleet, amounting to more than two hundred sail of all descriptions, after riding for some time triumphant in the channel, pillaged the coast of Gascony, and returned with their plunder to St. Mahé, a port in Bretagne. Here they were discovered by the mariners of Portsmouth and the cinque ports, who had collected eighty stout ships well manned, and prepared for battle. A challenge was given and accepted : the hostile fleets assembled round a ship which

1093.
Apr. 14.

had been moored in a particular spot by mutual consent ; and the victory was contested with a stubbornness that has seldom been paralleled. At length the fortune, or the valour, of the English prevailed. They captured every ship of the enemy, and, as no quarter was given, the majority of the crews perished in the ocean. The prizes, amounting to two hundred and forty, arrived safe in England : the number of the killed and drowned was swelled by exaggeration to fifteen thousand men.⁴⁶

This defeat, so murderous and disgraceful, provoked the resentment of Philip. From the king of England he could only demand redress : from the duke of Aquitaine he could exact it. It was asserted, probably with truth, that the mariners of Bayonne had not only taken a share in the action, but had also attempted to surprise the port of Rochelle : and the king's lieutenant was required to arrest and lodge in a French prison a certain number of the accused. He neglected the requisition : and to punish his disobedience, the seneschal of Perigord was ordered to take possession of all the lands belonging to Edward, which lay within his jurisdiction. But the civil officers were driven back by the military under the command of sir John St. John : and a peremptory summons was issued by the royal court of Paris, ordering Edward to

Edward
cited be-
fore Phi-
lip.

Nov. 29.

⁴⁶ Wals. 60. 479. Heming, i. 40. Trivet, 274.

CHAP.
III.

appear within twenty days after Christmas, and answer for these offences and contempts against his sovereign.⁴⁷ The king, who saw the real object of Philip, endeavoured to appease his resentment. By his ambassador, the bishop of London, he offered compensation to the sufferers on the part of France, provided equal restitution were made to the English: and when this was refused, proposed to refer the dispute either to arbitrators to be chosen by the two kings, or to the pope, "whose office it was to preserve concord among princes."⁴⁸ The bishop was succeeded by a more distinguished, and, it was hoped, a more welcome negotiator, Edmund, the brother to the king of England, and husband to the mother of the French queen. But the simplicity of the prince was not a match for the arts of his opponents. Philip's sole object, he was told, was to guard his honour: and a promise was given that if Gascony were surrendered to him during forty days, it should, at the expiration of that period, be faithfully restored on the petition of the two queens. A secret treaty to that effect was concluded. It was signed by the consort of Philip: Edward signified his consent: and the French monarch, in the presence of several witnesses, promised to observe it on the word of a king. The citation against Edward was now withdrawn, and

1294.
Jan. 1.

⁴⁷ Rym. ii. 617. 619.

⁴⁸ Walsing. 60. 481.

Edmund issued the orders, under which legal, and in some instances military, possession was given of Gascony to the officers of its superior lord.⁴⁹

CHAP.
III.
Feb. 3.

It must excite surprise that the king of England should so easily have fallen into the snare. But he was actuated by another consideration, the accomplishment of a treaty of marriage between himself and Margaret the sister of Philip. By that treaty the duchy of Guienne had been settled on his issue by the princess: and to carry this provision into legal execution, it was necessary that Guienne should be resigned into the hands of its lord, that by a new enfeoffment it might be settled on the king and his heirs by his second marriage. At the expiration of forty days Edmund reminded Philip of his engagement; and was requested to forbear till certain lords of the council should have departed from Paris. Some days after he repeated the demand, and received a positive refusal. Philip repaired to his court: rejected the arguments of Edward's advocates; and though the citation had been withdrawn, pronounced judgment against him for default of appearance.⁵⁰

He is
swindled
out of
Guienne.

Such is the account given by Edmund himself: and that the substance of it is true, appears from the narratives of the French historians, who, while they relate the cession of Guienne,

⁴⁹ Rym. ii. 619—622.
Heming. 42, 43

⁵⁰ Rym. ii. 622—626. West. 421.

CHAP.

III.

are utterly at a loss to account for its cause. The deception was most dishonourable to the character of Philip, though by the turbulence of the Gascons he was enabled to give to his conduct some appearance of justice. At Bourdeaux they had massacred the Normans, some of whom had been domiciliated for more than ten years in that city: at Freniae they had enticed the officers of the French customs on board a vessel, and decapitated them on the open deck: and in many of the fortresses they had hanged the serjeants at arms, who had taken possession in the name of the king of France. On these grounds Philip once more summoned Edward to answer before his peers: ⁵¹ but the king, instead of presenting himself as a culprit at the bar, had prepared to enforce his right at the head of a powerful army. He wrote an exculpatory letter to the barons and people of Guienne, acknowledging that he had done wrong to resign them to the king of France without their consent: but protesting that he had been more deceived than they, and assuring them, that in a short time he would free them from a yoke which they abhorred. He sent messengers to Paris to renounce in legal form the superiority of Philip. "Sir," said they, "the lord Edward, king of England, lord of Ireland, and duke of Aquitaine, did homage to you according to the

⁵¹ Rym. ii. 634, 635.

CHAP.
III.

“ peace concluded between your ancestors and
 “ his, which peace you have not observed. He
 “ made with you a secret treaty by means of
 “ his brother the lord Edmund, which treaty
 “ you have not kept. He has thrice demanded
 “ the restoration of his dutchy of Guienne,
 “ which restoration you have refused. It is
 “ evident then that you do not treat him as your
 “ man : and it is therefore his intention to be
 “ so no longer.” ⁵² But the elements seemed to

Rebellion
in Wales.

have conspired with his own subjects to frustrate
 his design. For seven weeks he was detained
 at Portsmouth by contrary winds : and the
 Welsh, who believed him to have sailed, rose
 in every part of the principality, surprised and
 murdered the English, and poured in great
 numbers into the marches. A large body of

Nov. 10.

troops which had been dispatched to quell the
 insurrection was defeated : and the king, abandon-
 ing the expedition to Guienne, hastened to
 Wales, to revive the spirits of the soldiery.
 Aided by the inclemency of the season the na-

1295.

tives bade defiance to Edward, who, on one oc-
 casion, was separated from his army by the sud-
 den rise of the river Conway, and was compelled
 with his followers to subsist for some days on
 the coarsest fare. But at the return of spring
 resistance melted away before him. Anglesey
 submitted : the royal banner was planted on the

⁵² Id. 614, 650.

CHAP.
III.

summit of Snowdun: the Welsh in despair burst into the marches: and at Caersecastle, Madoc, the leader of the insurgents, threw himself at the feet of the conqueror. A second time the conquest of Wales was achieved. Edward condemned the chieftains who had joined in the rebellion to close confinement in separate castles: their estates he gave to their heirs, but with a threat, that if they should imitate the perfidy of their fathers, they must expect a more severe punishment. The admonition was remembered: and from that period, says the historian, the Welsh began to attend to the cultivation of the soil, the profits of commerce, and the arts of peace.⁵³

War with
Scotland.

It was midsummer before Edward returned to his capital. Again he prepared to recover his transmarine dominions: again he was recalled to oppose his adversaries within the island. The Scottish barons longed to assert the independence of their country; but, warned by the fate of the Welsh insurgents, sought to fortify their efforts with the aid of the French monarch. The timid mind of Baliol wavered. He calculated the power of Edward, and trembled at the consequences of a failure. At last he allowed himself to be carried away by the current of public opinion; and resigned the management of the war to a committee composed of four prelates,

⁵³ Heming, i. 57. West. 423. Walsing. 63.

four earls, and four barons. An alliance offensive and defensive was hastily concluded with France. If Edward should invade Scotland, Philip engaged to employ all his forces against the weakest part of Edward's dominions: if he should transport an army to France, Baliol bound himself to pour his Scots into the north of England: and at the same time, to cement the union between the two crowns, a treaty of marriage was concluded between Edward the heir of Baliol, and Jane the eldest daughter of Charles of Valois, and the niece of Philip.⁵⁴ These transactions could not be concealed from the jealousy of Edward. He sent to Guienne a small force under his brother Edmund, who died soon after his arrival, and was succeeded in the command by the earl of Lincoln: but remained himself in England to watch the motions, and ascertain by experiment the real designs, of his Scottish vassal. He first called on Baliol for aid in his intended expedition into Guienne; then demanded the castles of Roxburgh, Jedburgh, and Berwick, as a security during his absence; and lastly cited the king of Scots before his court to be held at Newcastle upon Tyne in the beginning of March. Had Baliol obeyed the summons, he would have found himself in the midst of an army of forty thousand men:⁵⁵ but his barons were careful to keep him

CHAP.
III.
Oct. 2^d.

1296.
March.

⁵⁴ Anderson, Diplom. Scot. Tab. xli.

⁵⁵ Edward's army consisted of 30,000 foot, and 4000 horse. The

CHAP.

III

secluded in the Highlands, and made the most active preparations for the invasion of England. Accident allotted to the Scots the glory or the blame of commencing hostilities. Robert de Ros the lord of Werk, who was enamoured of a Scottish lady, had at her persuasion embraced the cause of her countrymen. His brother, who commanded in his absence, sent the information to Edward; and a body of a thousand men, who marched to take possession of the castle, were surprised in the night, and cut off almost to a man. Edward expressed his satisfaction that the Scots had been the first to draw the sword, and advancing to Werk, remained there during the festival of Easter. A feeble attempt was made to withdraw him from the borders by the invasion of Cumberland. But the king steadily pursued his object. The English army invested Berwick: the next day it was carried by assault, and seven thousand men perished in the massacre.⁵⁶ For this loss the Scots consoled themselves with the destruction of Corbridge and Hexham: and Baliol sent to the English monarch a formal renunciation of homage in his

Mar. 26.

Berwick
taken.

Mar. 30.

April 5.

bishop of Durham joined him with 1000 foot, and 700 horse: to which must be added a body of Welsh, and another of Irish. Heming. i. 85.

⁵⁶ Heming. 87—92. Walsing. 66. 483. Trivet, 235. 238. About this time Robert Bruce died. His son refused to join his countrymen against Edward: and his lands were in consequence taken from him and given to the earl of Buchan. Heming. 67. 83.

own name and that of his barons.⁵⁷ “Felon
“fool!” exclaimed Edward, in a tone of con-
tempt and pity, “but since he will not obey
“our summons, we must go and find him out.”

The earl Warenne was dispatched with a num-
erous force to besiege the castle of Dunbar,
which belonged to the king’s adherent, the
earl of March, but had been betrayed by the
countess to her countrymen. The garrison
agreed to surrender, if the place were not re-
lieved in three days, and on the third the Scot-
tish army appeared stretching along the chain
of hills beyond the town. Warenne resolved to
give battle: but, whether it were from design,
or on account of the nature of the ground, or-
dered his troops to make a retrograde move-
ment. “They run,” exclaimed several voices
from the heights; and with a loud shout forty
thousand men precipitated themselves into the
valley to trample under foot the imaginary fu-
gitives. To their astonishment they met the
enemy advancing in a compact mass: conster-
nation spread itself from banner to banner: the
pursuers fled: and the English obtained a cheap,
and on their part an almost bloodless, victory.
Report raised the loss of the Scots to fifteen or
twenty thousand men: the most moderate cal-
culation has reduced it to half that number.
But Scotland was now subdued: Dunbar, Rox-

Victory at
Dunbar.
April 27.

⁵⁷ Rym. ii. 707.

CHAP.
III.

June 24.

Resigna-
tion of
Baliol.

July 2.

His capti-
vity, re-
lease, and
death.

burgh, and Jedburgh opened their gates: Edinburgh made but a shew of resistance: Stirling was deserted by its garrison: and Perth, Brechin, Forfar, and St. Andrew's, submitted.⁵⁸ The unfortunate Baliol, mounted on a galloway, and bearing a white wand, the emblem of vassalage, met his conqueror in a churchyard, and expressed his sorrow for his alliance with the French king, and rebellion against his liege lord. But he did not move the resolution of the king of England. He had refused to hold Scotland of Edward: he was therefore unworthy to recover it: and he was compelled to sign at Kincardin an instrument, in which he acknowledged the right of the superior lord to enter into possession of his fee after the renunciation of homage, and transferred to him the fealty, which the Scottish barons and freeholders had sworn to himself.⁵⁹ The king granted to the deposed monarch every indulgence compatible with his own interests. With a princely retinue, and the tower of London for his residence, he enjoyed the full liberty of a circle of twenty miles round the walls of the city. If we may believe Baliol himself, he parted from his crown without regret. The feuds and violence of the Scots, their dissimulation, perfidy, and attempts upon his life, had effectually subdued his desire of reigning: and his only ambition was to retire to

⁵⁸ Heming. 93—100. Walsing. 67. 431. Fordun, xi. 21. 26.

⁵⁹ Rym. ii. 709.

Normandy, and lead a life of privacy on his patrimonial estates. After three years his wishes were gratified. He solemnly declared that he would never more intermeddle in the affairs of Scotland:⁶⁰ the pontiff became surety for the performance of his promise: and he was delivered to the bishop of Vicenza, the papal legate, with a protestation on the part of Edward, that by this delivery, Boniface should acquire nothing more than the right of disposing of the person of Baliol, and of his English estates.⁶¹ The exile soon ceased to be an object of jealousy: nor had his death, which happened six years later, any influence on the course of events. By his countrymen he has been condemned as a weak and mean-spirited prince: to me he appears as deserving of pity as blame. His reign had ceased long before his resignation of the sceptre: and the sovereign authority was exercised by the lords of his council, who used his name merely as a sanction to their own measures. With them the war originated: by them it was conducted: and they were responsible for its result. By the king, who foresaw the con-

CHAP.
III.1293.
April 1.1299.
July 18.

1305.

⁶⁰ Tantam invenit in hominibus ejusdem regni malitiam, fraudem, intentionis sue non est pradiatum regnum ingredi, seu de ipso regno aut pertinentiis suis per se, vel per alium aut alios intromittere nullo modo. See the authentic act apud Prynn, 665. Brady, iii. App. 28.

⁶¹ Rym. ii. 840. 847. Carte by mistake has represented this instrument as an acknowledgment by the pope of Edward's superiority.

CHAP.
III.

Edward
settles the
govern-
ment of
Scotland.

sequences, it was always condemned: but he united his own fate to the fate of the nation; and became the victim of that confidence which so rashly provoked, and of that despondency which so hastily abandoned, the contest. Baliol lost his kingdom: of the real authors of the war, some immediately, all after a short interval, recovered their honours and their possessions.

From Perth Edward marched to Aberdeen, from Aberdeen to Elgin: but every sword was sheathed, and every knee was ready to bend to the lord of Scotland. Unable to discover an enemy he turned to the south,⁶² and summoned a parliament to meet him at Berwick, where all the Scottish barons, prelates, and tenants of the crown in person, all the burghs and commonalties by their representatives, did homage, and swore fealty. He made no innovation in the laws of the kingdom or the nature of the tenures; alienated no property; retained with one or two exceptions the former governors in the custody of the royal castles; and if he com-

⁶² It has been said that Edward destroyed all the proofs of Scottish independence, which existed in the records of the different monasteries. But lord Hailes candidly owns, that he can discover no other proof of the assertion than that the English destroyed some of the charters belonging to the abbey of Scone, and tore the seals from others. They also carried off the Scottish regalia, and the fatal stone seat, on which the Scottish kings sat at their coronation, and of which it was believed that

Scoti, quocumque locatum

Invenient lapidem, regnare tenentur ibidem.

It was placed in Westminster Abbey. Henning. 37. Ford. xi. 25.

pelled the most dangerous of the Scottish barons to reside for a short period on the south of the Trent, he engaged to restore them to their full liberty as soon as he had concluded peace with the king of France. The highest offices of government were vested in Englishmen, under the earl of Surrey, who was distinguished by the title of guardian of the kingdom.⁶³

The repeated insurrections of the Welsh must have taught Edward that oaths of fealty, extorted from a conquered people, impose but a feeble restraint on the love of independence. But he relied more on the apprehensions than the conscience of the Scottish chieftains. The rapidity of his conquest had demonstrated the superiority of his power, and he rightly judged that the penalties of treason would confine to his duty every man, whose family was in possession of property and honours. Indeed, at this period, Scotland owed little to the exertions of her nobles. It was an obscure individual, the youngest son of a country gentleman, who kindled and nourished the flame of Scottish patriotism. Historians conjecture that William Wal-

Rise of
William
Wallace.

1297.

⁶³ Rym. ii. 723. 727. 731. Heming. 103. 118. Ford. xi. 27. Boniface VIII. seems not to have approved of this conquest. In a letter to the king he exhorts him not to listen to the suggestions of men, whose interest it is to involve him in war: and adds, that though he now possesses Scotland unjustly, it is his (the pope's) endeavour, as he has already informed him, to obtain it for him justly, without the diminution of his fame, or danger to his salvation. Rym. ii. 301. The meaning of this enigma I cannot unravel.

CHAP.
III.

May.

Wallace was born in the neighbourhood of Paisley: they assert that his hostility to the English originated more in the necessity of self-preservation than the love of his country. He had committed murder; he fled from the pursuit of justice to the woods; and there was joined by men of similar fortunes, who sought to escape the punishment of their crimes, or had refused to swear fealty to the conqueror. At first they supported themselves by nocturnal depredations: success added to their courage, and multiplied their numbers; and a fortunate rencontre, in which William Heslop, the sheriff of Lanarkshire, was slain, gave celebrity to the name of Wallace. There was another leader of outlaws, sir William Douglas, who had been made prisoner at Berwick, and had recovered his liberty from the generosity of Edward. He joined with Wallace in an attempt to surprise at Scone the chief justiciary Ormesby, who lost his treasures, but saved himself by the precipitancy of his flight.⁶¹ Animated by their example, or prompted by similar causes, other independent chieftains arose in different counties, who assaulted the English and the partisans of the English, wherever it could be done with the hope of impunity, massacred all who fell into their hands, and compelled their own countrymen to fight under their standards. The origin and progress

⁶¹ Fordun, xi. 23. Walsing. 70. Heming. 113, 119

of these numerous parties had been viewed with secret satisfaction by the steward of Scotland, and Wisheart the bishop of Glasgow, who determined to collect them into one body, and give to their efforts one common direction. Declaring themselves the asserters of Scottish independence, they invited the different leaders to rally around them: and the summons was obeyed by Wallace and Douglas, by sir Alexander Lindsay, sir Andrew Moray, and sir Richard Lundy. The younger Bruce, earl of Carrick, was solicited to support their cause. He knew not how to decide. Whichever party succeeded, he might gain or lose a crown. At first he repaired to Carlisle, renewed his fealty to Edward, and ravaged the lands of sir William Douglas: then he changed his sentiments; tempted in vain the fidelity of the men of Annandale; and hastened with his own retainers to the camp of the patriots.⁶⁵

Edward had now undertaken the recovery of Guienne: nor could he be diverted from his object by the danger of losing Scotland. He cherished the hope that his deputy might be able to put down the insurgents: he was convinced that at his return he could easily reconquer whatever should have been lost. The guardian and treasurer were on their road to confer with the king, when they received orders to collect the forces

The Scots
surrender
at Irvine.

⁶⁵ Knyght, 2513, 2514. Walsing, 70. Heming, 119.

CHAP.
III.

of the six northern counties of England, and to re-establish the royal authority in Scotland. Two armies were formed, one on the eastern, the other on the western coast. The latter under Henry lord Percy, and sir Robert Clifford, discovered the Scots near Irvine, on the right bank of the river. But the ardour of the patriots had been chilled by the dissensions of their chieftains: and sir Richard Lundy abandoned a cause, which he observed could never prosper as long as it was at variance with itself. His defection opened the most gloomy prospects to the other leaders: Bruce, the steward, the bishop, Lindsay, and Douglas, hastened to capitulate for the safety of their lives, limbs, and estates: and signed a paper, in which they acknowledged their guilt, promised satisfaction, and undertook to use their influence in pacifying the country. Wallace and Moray, who had nothing to lose, were not included in the capitulation: and this circumstance increased their popularity with the common soldiers, who disapproved of the pusillanimity of their chiefs. They were followed by the greater part of the army in their retreat beyond the Frith: and many noblemen, who affected an outward shew of loyalty, secretly encouraged their tenantry to join the insurgents.⁶⁶

July 9.]

The king had already sailed to the continent,

⁶⁶ Rym. ii. 774. Knyght. 2515, 2516. Walsing. 70. Heming. 122—124. Trivet. 300.

and Warenne, with a numerous army, had reached the town of Stirling. Wisheart and Douglas, unable to perform their engagements, voluntarily surrendered to the English ; but the steward, with the earl of Lenox, amused the guardian with a pretended negotiation, till Wallace and Moray had assembled all their forces behind the hills in the neighbourhood of Cambuskenneth. They then brought an answer that the insurgents would not admit of any terms short of the national independence, and promised to join the royal army on the next morning, with a retinue of forty knights. That morning Warenne, in opposition to the advice of Lundy, ordered the English to cross the Forth by the bridge, which was so narrow that no more than two armed men could march over it at the same time. Wallace at a distance watched their movements : and as soon as he saw about five thousand horse and foot on the left bank of the river, ordered his followers to pour down from the heights, and annihilate their enemies. Warenne, unable to send assistance, was compelled to remain on the right bank, the idle spectator of the massacre of his men. All who had crossed, with very few exceptions, fell by the sword, or perished in the river. Among the slain was the treasurer Cressingham ; and the Scots, to shew their hatred for the man, flayed his dead body, and made the skin into thongs for their horses. This unexpected dis-

CHAP.
III.

Moray and
Wallace
gain a
great vic-
tory.

Sep. 10.

CHAP.
III.

Nov. 7.

aster broke all the plans of the guardian. The western army had already been disbanded: the natives in his rear were rising to intercept his retreat: and his only resource was to burn the bridge, reinforce the garrisons of the different castles, and withdraw as speedily as possible into England. Wallace and Moray now styled themselves "the generals," and their followers "the army of John king of Scotland:" they crossed the borders with multitudes who joined them in the pursuit of plunder: and during a month the open country in Northumberland and Cumberland, was ravaged by a licentious and revengeful soldiery.⁶⁷

Wallace is
defeated
at Falkirk.

1298.

From this period we lose sight of Moray. His associate Wallace appears alone on the scene, as "the guardian of the kingdom, and general of the armies of Scotland,"⁶⁸ under which title he summoned a parliament to meet at Perth. But this adventurer had now reached the meridian of his greatness: and his fall was even more rapid than his rise. As long as the attention of the king was directed to the recovery of his transmarine dominions, Wallace had triumphed: but the efforts of Boniface VIII. to restore peace between England and France, had at last been crowned with success: and by the industry of his legates, who had spent two years in journeys

⁷ Fordun, xi. 29. Heming, 126—136. Knyght, 2516—2522. Wal. 73.

⁶⁸ Anderson, Diplom. Scot. Tab. xlv.

and conferences, Edward and Philip had been induced to sign a preliminary treaty. Both kings consented to refer their differences to the equity of Boniface, not as pontiff, but as a private judge, selected by the parties: and he immediately published his first award, confirming the armistice; proposing marriages between Edward, who was now a widower, and Margaret the sister, and between Edward's son and Isabella the daughter, of Philip; and taking into his own hands all the possessions which the king of England held in France now or before the war, to be disposed of by himself in virtue of his power of arbitrator, unless the two kings should previously come to a satisfactory agreement.⁶⁹ Edward, as soon as he was freed from all danger on the part of the French monarch, sent orders to Warene, who lay with a powerful army at Berwick, to wait his arrival; landed at Sandwich, met his parliament at York, and repaired to Roxburgh, where he found himself at the head of eight thousand horse, and eighty thousand foot, principally Irish and Welsh. From Roxburgh he penetrated to the Forth: no enemy appeared to dispute his progress; but the want of provisions, and the ravages of disease compelled him to make a retrograde movement; and he had almost reached Edinburgh, when a few ships laden with supplies

Mar. 14.

June 25.

⁶⁹ Rym. ii. 669. 682. 685. 707. 731. 754. 791. 795. 809. 812. 817. 819.

CHAP.
III.

July 22.

anchored in the Frith. At Templeliston he refreshed his army, and received information that Wallace with his Scots lay in the forest of Falkirk, watching an opportunity to harass his retreat. The English were immediately in motion, retraced their steps to the moor of Linlithgow, where they passed the night on the bare heath, and the next morning discovered the enemy in battle array behind a morass.⁷⁰ Wallace had formed his pikemen, the flower of his army, into four circular bodies, connected with each other by a line of archers from the forest of Selkirk. Before them he had planted a defence of palisades, behind them, probably to prevent their retreat, he had stationed the Scottish cavalry: and having thus imposed on the most reluctant the necessity of fighting, triumphantly exclaimed, "I haif brocht you to the king, hop gif you can."⁷¹ The first division of the English, commanded by the earl mareschal, from its ignorance of the ground, was entangled in the morass: the second, led by the bishop of Durham, wheeled round the swamp,

⁷⁰ Hemingford, 163, and Walsingham, 75, inform us that before the battle the king had two ribs broken by a kick from his horse: Knyghton, that he spurred his horse with such violence as to break two of the horse's ribs! 2527.

⁷¹ Wals. 75. These words evidently signify, I have brought you to the king, get away without fighting if you can. To hop means to dance or run about: and is still used in that sense in the northern counties. Lord Hailes has changed *king* into *ring*, on the authority of Westminster's Latin version: and makes it: I have brought you to the ring, dance as well as you can: words which appear to me to be without meaning. An. of Scot. 258, 259.

and came in sight of the cavalry, when the prelate ordered his men to wait the arrival of the other bodies. "Tothy mass, bishop," exclaimed a knight, and rushed on the enemy. They fled at the first charge: the bowmen were trampled under foot: but the four bodies of pikemen opposed on all sides an impenetrable front to their assailants. Their resistance, however, only delayed their fate. Edward advanced his archers and military engines: an opening was soon made in each circle; and the cavalry rushing through the chasm, completed their destruction. From twenty to forty thousand Scots are said to have perished. Wallace himself escaped. But his sun had now set for ever; he spent the rest of his life a fugitive in the forests, from which he had formerly issued for the chastisement of the English, and the liberation of his country.⁷²

The poverty of Scotland was its protection. After his victory Edward traversed it in different directions: but the impossibility of procuring provisions for his army compelled him to return to England: and the only advantage which he derived from the campaign, was the opportunity it had offered him of relieving and strengthening the castles in Lothian. All Scotland north of the two friths, together with Galloway, was independent: and William Lamberton bishop of St. Andrew's, Robert Bruce earl of Carrick, and

The Scots maintain themselves in the north; Sept. 15.

1299.

⁷² Fordun, xi. 34. Yeming. 159—165. Wal. 75.

CHAP.
III.

John Comyn the younger, were appointed a council of regency to govern in the name of Baliol, who was still acknowledged as lawful king. They undertook the siege of Stirling: nor was Edward at leisure to succour that important fortress. His parliament had approved the papal award: and as the envoys of the three powers were to meet at Montreuil, he was advised to remain in the south, that he might be near the place of negotiation. The summer months passed away: his marriage with Margaret, the French princess, detained him several weeks:⁷³ and when he joined the army at Berwick, he was compelled to yield to the remonstrances of his barons, who refused to expose themselves to the dangers of a winter campaign. He had already rejected the proposal of a truce, and thus lost by his obstinacy the strong castle of Stirling.⁷⁴

Nov.

The pope
writes in
their fa-
vour.

1298.
July 10.

Under the short government of Wallace the Scots had solicited the protection of the pontiff; who, in a letter to Edward, after describing the attention which the holy see had always paid to his interests, earnestly exhorted him to live at peace with his neighbours, and to listen no longer

⁷³ They were married at Canterbury on the 12th of September. The queen's dower was a yearly rent of 15,000 pounds Tournois (about 3750*l.* sterling). As the young prince was only thirteen, and Isabella only seven years of age, their marriage was contracted in private by proxy. Her dower amounted to 13,000 pounds Tournois (3250*l.* sterling). Rym. ii. 819. Wals. 77. West. 432.

⁷⁴ Rym. ii. 841. 847. 859. Knyght. 2528.

to the suggestions of his ambition.⁷⁵ To a request conveyed in such general terms it was easy to return an evasive answer; but the new regents dispatched envoys to Rome who more powerfully interested Boniface in their favour. They referred their quarrel with the king of England to his decision, because he was the only judge whose jurisdiction extended over both kingdoms: they reminded him that by remaining indifferent, he would suffer Edward to annex to his own throne a realm, which of right belonged to the see of Rome:⁷⁶ and they exhibited to him a long series

⁷⁵ Rym. ii. 827.

⁷⁶ This pretension, that Scotland belonged to the see of Rome, is attributed by our historians to the ambition of Boniface. He is said to have forged a false title to attribute the superiority to himself. But it is certainly more ancient than Boniface. Not only was it strenuously maintained by the Scottish agents at Rome (*Regnum Scotiæ præcipuum et peculiare allodium ecclesiæ Romanæ—in temporalibus immediate subditum ecclesiæ Romanæ*. Ferdun, xi. 51. 54. 56, 57): but the regents in their instructions to their envoy declare that it was objected to Edward, when he first advanced his claim to the superiority (*Licet Romana ecclesia tunc pro parte ipsius regni fuisset nominata domina regni ejusdem coram ipso, sicut erat, ipse tamen rex allegationem hujusmodi non admisit*. Ford. xi. 53). Certain it is that Nicholas IV., when Edward desired him in 1290 to confirm the claim of the English crown, replied that he could not do it, because it would be to deprive the Roman see of a superiority which belonged to it. *Se non posse in regno Scotiæ sedi Apostolicæ obnoxio ecclesiæ Romanæ derogare, ejusque fiduciaris regi Anglo submittere*. Spond. ad ann. 1290 ex regist. Vatic. ep. 102. The origin of this pretension I cannot discover: but I suspect that it was first advanced by the Scots during their long controversy with the archbishop of York respecting the independence of their church, which terminated in a decision, that the Scottish prelates were immediately subject to no one but the pope. See also note 36.

CHAP.
III.1299.
June 27

of proofs that the kings of England had not, nor ought to have, any superiority over the kings of Scotland. These representations induced the pontiff to interfere : and a letter was written to Edward almost in the very words of the Scottish memorial. Boniface began by asserting, what he pretended the king must know, that Scotland had belonged from ancient times, and did still belong, in full right to the Roman see. He then proved that it was not a fief of the English crown, from the following instances : 1. When Henry III. in his war with the earl of Leicester, received assistance from the king of Scotland, he acknowledged by his letters patent that it was as a favour, and not as a feudal service : 2. When Alexander III. did homage to Edward for Tyndale and Penrith, he protested that he did not do it, nor did he owe it, for the crown of Scotland : 3. At the death of that prince, neither the wardship of his daughter Margaret, nor the custody of the kingdom was claimed by Edward : and 4. In the treaty of marriage between the prince of England and Margaret it was declared, that the kingdom of Scotland should remain for ever free and independent, and in the case of her death be restored in that state to the next heir. Hence the pontiff expressed his hope that the king, desisting from an unjust aggression, would set at liberty the bishops, clergy, and natives of Scotland, whom he held in captivity : and, if he thought he had any right to the whole or part of

that kingdom, would pursue his claim to it within the six months following before the holy see. He concluded in a strain of authority, by revoking and reserving to his own decision every process or controversy, which might be then pending between the king of England, and the king or people of Scotland.⁷⁷ This extraordinary document was enclosed in a letter to Winchelsey archbishop of Canterbury, ordering him, under the penalty of suspension, to present it to Edward. By some unaccountable delay twelve months elapsed before it was delivered to the primate, who immediately repaired to Carlisle. But the king had already reached Kircudbright; and the intermediate country was in the possession of the Scots. For six weeks the archbishop lingered on the borders, afraid to proceed, yet distressed through want of provisions; at length he heard that the army was on its return, and crossing the sands found Edward encamped in the neighbourhood of Caerlavarock. He delivered the letter, which was publicly read in Latin and French to all the barons in the king's presence. It came at a most critical moment. The peace with France was not yet concluded: and Gascony was still sequestered in the hands of the pontiff. Unwilling to offend one, whose friendship was so necessary to him, he took time to deliberate, and then replied, that in a matter

1300.
Aug. 26.

⁷⁷ Rym. ii. 344—345.

CHAP.
III.

which concerned the right of his crown it was his duty to consult his other counsellors: that in a short time he would assemble his parliament, and with its advice would return a satisfactory answer to the pontiff. The archbishop returned: he was followed by Edward: and at the request of the king of France an armistice was granted to the Scots.⁷⁸

Answer of
the Eng-
lish ba-
rons.

To answer the letter of Boniface a parliament was summoned to meet at Lincoln. The universities were ordered to depute six civilians; the monasteries to furnish every document in their possession, which could bear upon the question. After some debate a reply was framed, which was signed and sealed by one hundred and four earls and barons, in the name of the commonalty of England: and which deserves to be transcribed, as it shews how accurately our ancestors could distinguish between the spiritual and temporal authority of the pontiff. After expressing their astonishment at the tenor of the papal rescript, and asserting that Scotland never belonged in temporals to the see of Rome, they

1301.
Feb. 12.

⁷⁸ West, 435. 437—439. Lord Hailes says, that Rymer has dated the bull erroneously in 1299 (*Annals* 267). But it bears the same date, *anno quinto*, in Hemingford, Westminster, and Fordun. From the archbishop's reply to the pope it appears that he was twenty days on his journey to Carlisle, remained on the borders six weeks, and reached the king on the 26th of August. Of course he must have received the bull in the end of June: and as it was dated on the twenty-seventh of that month, it must have been written the year before.

thus notice the authority, which the pope had arrogated to himself, of deciding the controversy by judicial process. “By a custom, at all times inviolably observed, a privilege arising from the pre-eminence of the regal dignity, the kings of England have never pleaded, or been bound to plead, respecting their rights in the kingdom of Scotland, or any other their temporal rights, before any judge ecclesiastical or secular. It is, therefore, and by the grace of God shall always be, our common and unanimous resolve, that with respect to the rights of his kingdom of Scotland or other his temporal rights, our aforesaid lord the king shall not plead before you, nor submit in any manner to your judgment, nor suffer his right to be brought into question by any inquiry, nor send agents or procurators for that purpose to your court. For such proceedings would be to the manifest disherison of the rights of the crown of England and the royal dignity, the evident subversion of the state of the kingdom, and the prejudice of the liberties, customs, and laws, which we have inherited from our fathers, to the observance and defence of which we are bound by our oaths, and which we will maintain to the best of our power, and by the assistance of God will defend with all our might. Neither do we, nor will we, permit, as we neither can nor ought, our aforesaid lord the king to do, or attempt to do,

CHAP. " even if he wished it, any of the things afore-
 III. " said, things which were never heard of or
 " claimed before, and which are so prejudicial
 " to this realm." ⁷⁹

Answer of
 Edward.
 May 7.

Though Edward refused to acknowledge the pope as a judge, he was willing to explain his right to him as a friend. A long letter was written, and the superiority of his predecessors was accurately traced back to the remote age of Heli and Samuel. It was then that Brute the Trojan, having cleared the island of the giants its indigenous inhabitants, divided it between his three sons Lochrine, Albanact, and Camber, but on the condition that the younger should hold their portions in fee of the eldest brother. Lochrine the eldest established himself at Trinovant, since called London, and the pre-eminence which he enjoyed, was claimed and exercised by all his successors, particularly the renowned monarchs, Dunwall, Beline, and Arthur. From the fictions of romance he passed at length to real history, enumerated every instance, which he could collect, of homage done by the kings of Scotland to the Saxon and Norman princes, and contended, in a tone of triumph, that these formed a satisfactory justification of his conduct, a complete refutation of the false suggestions of his opponents.⁸⁰ The answers of the king and the parliament were

⁷⁹ Pym. ii. 373—375.

⁸⁰ Rym. ii. 883—888.

delivered by the pope to Baldred Bassett the Scottish envoy, and by him transmitted to the council of regency. The instructions which he received in return, and the memorial which he presented to Boniface, are still extant. He opposes fiction to fiction, and history to history. The Scots, he says, care not for Brute or his institutions. They are sprung from Scota, the daughter of Pharaoh, who landed in Ireland, and whose descendants wrested by force of arms the northern half of Britain from the progeny of Brute. To the Britons, therefore, they owe no subjection. Nor is it of any consequence if some of the Saxon princes occasionally penetrated into Scotland. Edward cannot claim from the Saxons. He is descended from the Normans, and no king of Scotland ever did homage to the Norman kings, with the exception of William the lion, for any thing but lands situated in England, as is evident from the instances which were inserted before in the papal letter, and from the refusal of Innocent IV. to grant to Henry III. the tenths of Scotland, or to allow his interference in the coronation of the king of Scots. In opposition to the answer of the parliament, he observes that, if Edward declines the judgment of the pontiff, it is because he is conscious of the weakness of his claim: but that he is not to be witness and judge in the same cause: that the two realms are equal and independent: and that in all con-

CHAP.
III.

controversies between them they must have recourse to a higher tribunal, that is, to the church of Rome. He adds, that notwithstanding the contrary assertion of the English, it is notorious that Scotland is the property, the peculiar allodium of the holy see: that its inhabitants from the time of their conversion have always acknowledged the direct dominion of their country in temporals as well as spirituals, to be vested in the Roman church: and that this superiority was confirmed to it by Constantine the great, when he made to the chair of St. Peter a donation of all the isles in the western ocean: on which account he trusts that the pope will extend his powerful protection to his faithful and devoted vassals the natives of Scotland.⁸¹

Recovery
of Gui-
enne.

But the time was gone by, when Boniface, if he had possessed the will, could have dared to fight the battles of these vassals. A long succession of petty and mutual injuries had embittered the minds of the pontiff and the king of France; till their dissension gradually ripened into open hostility, Boniface excommunicated his opponent, and threatened to pronounce the sentence of deposition: and Philip appealed to a future council, accused the pontiff of heresy, and by the activity of his partisans, actually detained him a captive for the space of three days. During the progress of this quarrel each was

⁸¹ Fordun, xi. 46—63.

anxious to obtain and preserve the friendship of Edward. The pope no longer maintained the cause of the Scots: Philip, whose promises had induced them to defy the king of England, was content to obtain for them a few short and useless suspensions of arms. Edward improved the opportunity to urge the conclusion of peace between England and France. He recovered Guienne; the earl of Lincoln swore fealty for it in his name; and a treaty of commerce sealed the amity between the two nations. The Scottish envoys expressed their surprise that no stipulation had been introduced in favour of Scotland: but their complaints were silenced by the promise that, in the approaching interview between the kings, Philip himself would undertake their cause, and elicit from the generosity of their enemy more advantageous conditions, than he could have obtained from ambassadors bound by written instructions. It is useless to say that the promise was not fulfilled.⁸²

CHAP.
III.

1303.
May 20.

Before spring an English army under John de Segrave had received orders to march from Berwick to Edinburgh. In a country which had long been kept in subjection by English garrisons, that general had no expectation of meeting an enemy; and the first division of his army was surprised near Roslin by a superior force under John Comyn, and Simon Fraser. Had

Edward.
overruns
Scotland.

Feb. 24.

⁸² Rym. ii. 923, 929.

CHAP.

III.

Segrave fallen back on the rest of his troops, he might have evaded the danger : but he scorned to flee, and rushing on the enemy, was wounded, and made prisoner with twenty other knights. The Scots pursuing their success, fell on the second division : which only escaped destruction by the arrival of the third. The battle was now renewed, and the English, having recovered the person of their general, retired.⁸³ The victory was of course claimed by the Scots : its importance was magnified by the national partiality ; and a fallacious gleam of hope enlivened the cause of freedom. But Edward soon passed the borders at the head of an army, with which it would have been folly for the Scottish patriots to contend.⁸⁴ They cherished, however, a hope that its progress might be arrested on the banks of the Forth, and encamped on the spot, which had been consecrated in their eyes by the first victory of Wallace. But the king marched past the bridge that had proved so fatal to Cressingham ; and crossed by a ford at the distance of a few miles. As soon as he appeared on the left bank, the host of his opponents disappeared : every town was filled with loyal inhabitants anxious to greet the arrival of their sovereign : and the small castle of Brechin was the first

⁸³ Heming. 197. Wals. 87. Ford. xii. 2.3

⁸⁴ Out of his special grace the king allowed such of his military tenants, as were clergymen, widows, or infirm, to remain at home, on the payment of a fine of 20*l.* for every knight's fee. Rym. ii. 923.

place, the gates of which he found shut against him. On the twentieth day of the siege, Mauld the governor was slain by a stone from one of the engines; and the garrison solicited the clemency of the conqueror. Edward recommenced his progress: he advanced through Aberdeen and Banff into Caithness, and on his return fixed his residence for the winter in the great abbey of Dumfermlin.⁸⁵ To this place the Scots hastened to make their peace: and after some consultation a very comprehensive treaty was concluded between him and Comyn, the Scottish guardian. It was agreed that all prisoners and hostages on both sides should be restored: that Comyn and his adherents should have their lives, limbs, liberty and estates, subject however to certain fines, to be determined in the next parliament: that for the tranquillity of the realm Fraser and Boys should, unless they obtained a pardon, banish themselves during three years to some foreign country, but not to France: the bishop of Glasgow, James lord Steward, and John Soulis, should reside for two years south of the river Trent: Graham and Lindsay should retire into England for six

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III.

Aug. 9.

1304.
Feb. 9.

⁸⁵ West. 446. Ford. xii. 3. Dumfermlin was a place of considerable strength and importance. Besides the church and convent, it contained many large buildings for the accommodation of the Scottish parliament. During the war these had frequently offered an asylum to the marauding parties of the patriots, and were now destroyed by the English. The habitations of the monks were spared. West. *ibid*.

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months, and Wallace, if he pleased, should submit to the will and favour of his sovereign lord the king. The rest accepted these conditions: Wallace preferred the life of an outlaw, his original profession; and endeavoured to elude the vigilance of his enemies among his native forests and mountains.⁸⁶

Stirling
surren-
ders.

May.

The only place which still bade defiance to Edward was the strong castle of Stirling. Last year he had wisely neglected it, that he might have leisure to reduce the rest of the kingdom: now he required the governor, Sir William Oliphant, to surrender it instantly into his hands. That officer requested permission to consult sir John Soulis, formerly regent of Scotland, from whom he had received it in charge: Edward spurned the proposal: a council of English and Scottish barons was assembled; and a sentence of outlawry was published against the governor and his garrison. But it required no ordinary exertions to reduce a fortress, raised on a lofty rock, and defended by men of approved valour. The royal engines could make no impression on the outward defences: if the habitations within the walls were beaten down by the weight and multitude of the stones thrown upon them,⁸⁷ the garrison found shelter in caverns hewn out of the rock: and for ninety days Oliphant foiled every attempt of the enemy, and, which was more

⁸⁶ Ryl. Plac. Par. 369. Rot. Parl. i. 212, 213.

⁸⁷ The stones thrown into the town weighed from 2 to 3 cwt. Heming, 205.

difficult, resisted every solicitation of his friends. During the siege the courage or temerity of Edward exposed him to the most imminent danger. He received an arrow in his vest: his charger was struck down with a stone: but to the friendly expostulations of his knights he replied, that he fought in a just war, and his life was under the protection of heaven. At last the courage or means of the garrison were exhausted: for three days they abstained from measures of hostility; and frequent conferences were held at the foot of the walls between Oliphant and some English barons. The next morning the gates opened; and the governor and twenty-five of his companions were seen moving in slow procession down the hill, barefoot, in their shirts, with their hair dishevelled, and halters round their necks. When Edward met them, they fell on their knees, and with uplifted hands implored his favour. "I have no favour for you," he replied, "you must surrender at pleasure." They assented. "Then," said he, "my pleasure is, that you be hanged as traitors. Accept of this, or return to the castle." "Sir," answered Oliphant, "we acknowledge our guilt: our lives are at your disposal." "And what say you?" rejoined the king, addressing the others. "We are all guilty," they exclaimed: "we all throw ourselves on your mercy." The king turned aside to wipe the tears from his eyes, and ordered them to be

July 24.

CHAP. conducted as prisoners, but not in chains, into
 III. England.⁸⁸

Execution
 of Wal-
 lace.

The surrender of Stirling completed the reduction of Scotland. The king disbanded his army; ordered the courts of exchequer and king's bench, which had sitten during seven years at York, to resume their former station at Westminster; and applied to the reformation of the abuses which had crept into the government of his native dominions. The only man, whose patriotism and enmity could give him a moment's uneasiness, was Wallace; and in a few months Wallace was brought a captive to London. His retreat, so his contemporaries believed, had been betrayed by one of his followers, whose brother he had killed. He was surprised in his bed by sir John Monteith, the governor of Dunbarton; was placed at the bar in Westminster hall with a crown of laurel on his head; and was arraigned for the crimes of treason, murder, and robbery. The other charges he admitted: to that of treason he pleaded not guilty, because he had never sworn fealty to the king of England. He was condemned on the verdict of a jury of gentlemen; and suffered the usual punishment of traitors.⁸⁹

Aug. 23.

His real
 actions.

It may perhaps offend the national partiality of some among my readers, but I greatly sus-

⁸⁸ West. 448—450. Rym. ii. 950. 952. Heming. i. 205, 206.

⁸⁹ West. 451. Stow, 209.

pect that Wallace owes his celebrity as much to his execution as to his exploits. Of all the Scottish chieftains, who deserved and experienced the enmity of Edward, he alone perished on the gallows: and on this account his fate called forth and monopolized the sympathy of his countrymen. They revered him as the martyr of their independence: his blood animated them to vengeance: the huts and glens, the forests and mountains, which he had frequented, became consecrated in their eyes: and as the remembrance of his real exploits gradually faded, the aid of fiction was employed to embellish and eternize the character of the hero. If we may believe the Scottish writers, who lived a century or two after his death, he was gigantic in stature, powerful of limb, and patient of fatigue beyond his contemporaries. He knew no passion but the love of his country. His soul was superior to bribery or insult: and at the call of liberty he was as ready to serve in the ranks as to assume the command of the army. His courage possessed a talismanic power, which led his followers to attempt and execute the most hazardous enterprises; and which on Stainmoor compelled the king and army of England to flee from his presence, even before they entered upon action. Under so brave and accomplished a leader Scotland might have been saved: she was lost through the jealousy of her nobles, who chose to crouch in chains to a foreign despot, rather than owe their deliverance

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to a man of inferior family.⁹⁰ Of all this a part may perhaps be true ; but it is derived from no credible authority : much must be false, because it is contradicted by real history. The only great battles in which Wallace is *known* to have fought, are those of Stirling and Falkirk. In the first he was victorious : but he must share the glory of the action with sir Andrew Moray, who was certainly his equal in command, perhaps his superior.⁹¹ In the second he was defeated : and the defeat was the most disastrous that Scotland ever experienced. In the history of the next five years his name is scarcely mentioned : but when the rest of his countrymen made their peace with Edward, his interests were not forgotten. “ It was agreed that he also “ might put himself on the pleasure and grace “ of the king, if he thought proper.”⁹² He did

⁹⁰ See Fordun, Boece, Buchanan, and the achievements of Wallace by Blind Harry.

⁹¹ Fordun tells us that sir Andrew Moray fell in the action (Ferd. xi. 29). If so, he was succeeded immediately in the command by a son of the same name. For in the two letters of protection granted on the 7th of Nov. to the convent of Hexham, Andrew Moray is joined with Wallace, and in both his name occurs the first. Andreas de Moravia et Willelmus Wallensis duces exercitus Scotiæ. Henning. 135. Knyght. 2521.

⁹² Et quant a monsieur Guillian de Galeys est accorde, q'il se mette en la volonte, et en la grace nostre seigneur le Roy, si lui semble que bon soit. Ryley, 370. Lord Hailes thinks it doubtful, whether the words, *si lui semble*, refer to Wallace or the king. But they evidently refer to Wallace. The offer is made in the same manner to the bishop of Glasgow, the Steward, &c. *si lui semble que bon soit*. Rot. Par. i. 213.

not think proper: and to this, whether it were patriotism or obstinacy, we are to attribute his punishment. He had been summoned to a parliament of both nations held at St. Andrew's; and, as he neglected to appear, sentence of outlawry according to the Scottish law was pronounced against him, with Andrew Fraser, and the garrison of Stirling.⁹³ Edward was not, however, as he has been represented, a blood-thirsty tyrant.⁹⁴ He still accepted the submission of Fraser: and contented himself with the captivity of Oliphant and his companions, though they had uselessly involved him in so much danger, and entailed on him so much expense. If the fate of Wallace was different from that of all others, it proves that there was something peculiar in his case, which rendered him less deserving of mercy.

⁹³ Quorum petente rege iudicium secundum juris processum et leges Scoticanas, omnes qui convenerant, concordi sententia pronuntiarunt exlegatos. Trivet, 338.

⁹⁴ The only cruelties with which he is charged are the massacre at Berwick, and his treatment of the prisoners made at Dunbar. But it should be remembered that Berwick was taken by assault: and that the revenge of the conquerors had been probably excited by previous provocation, perhaps by the horrid barbarities perpetrated a few days before by the Scots in Cumberland (Heming. 87. Rym. ii. 327); perhaps by the conduct of the citizens of Berwick themselves, who though their town had been given up to Edward some months before (Rym. ii. 692) had, we know not how, been freed from the English garrison, and taken up arms against the king.—With respect to the prisoners at Dunbar, the story rests on the doubtful authority of Fordun, xi. 24, whose ambiguous language has been improved by the prejudices of later writers. See lord Hailes, i. 348.

CHAP.

III.

Settle-
ment of
Scotland.

1305.

Mar. 26.

Sep. 23.

To settle the government of his late acquisition, Edward condescended to ask and follow the advice of natives who had been distinguished by their attachment to the cause of independence, Wisheart bishop of Glasgow, Robert Bruce, and John Moubray. At their suggestion he summoned a Scottish parliament at Perth, in which ten commissioners were chosen to confer with the king in person at London.⁹⁵ To them were joined ten Englishmen with several of the judges, and all took an oath to give the best advice in their power, without suffering themselves to be swayed by any consideration of friendship, enmity, or interest. The result of their deliberations was: that John de Bretagne, Edward's nephew, should be appointed guardian of the realm, with the aid of the present chamberlain and chancellor, both Englishmen: that for the better administration of justice Scotland should be divided into four districts, Lothian, Galloway, the country between the Forth and the mountains, and the Highlands, to each of which two justiciaries, the one a native, the other an Englishman, were assigned: that certain persons then named should be sheriffs and escheators in the different counties, removable for others at the will of the guardian and cham-

⁹⁵ Ryley, 243. The deputies were chosen from each order, two bishops, two abbots, two earls, two barons, and two commoners, one from the south, the other from the north of the Forth. See also *Id.* 503. Their wages were to be paid to them by the commo. alty of the realm.

berlain, excepting the shires in which these offices were held by inheritance: that the castles of Roxburgh and Jedburgh should be put into the hands of the guardian: that the present governors should remain in those of Edinburgh, Linlithgow, Stirling, and Dunbarton; and that Bruce should intrust the castle of Kildrumny to a person, for whose fidelity he should be responsible. With respect to the laws, it was determined, that the custom of the Scots and Brets should be forthwith abolished:⁹⁶ that the statutes of David king of Scots, with the additions and amendments of other kings, should be read in an assembly of the good people of Scotland: and that such laws and customs as were plainly against the laws of God and reason should be amended immediately: but that, if any points of difficulty arose, deputies should be chosen to consult the king, and empowered to assent in the name of the commonalty to his decision.⁹⁷ This settlement was followed by an act of conditional indemnity. All who had engaged in the rebellion and afterwards submitted, were secured as to life and limb, and freed from imprisonment and disherison, on condition that

Oct. 15.

⁹⁶ Ordenece est, que l'usage de Scot et de Bret desorendroit soit defendu, si que mes ne soit usez. Ryley, 506. This was, probably, some old and national custom, which, like the tanistry of the Irish, was incompatible with the principles of the feudal jurisprudence. By the Brets I understand the men of Galloway, the descendants of the Picts, the ancient inhabitants of Britain.

⁹⁷ Ryley, 503—507. Rot. Parl. i. 267, 259.

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III.

they paid the following fines: the clergy one year's rent of their estates: those who submitted before Comyn, two years': Comyn, Gordon, and the bishop of Glasgow, three years': William de Baliol, Simon Fraser, and John Wisheart, four years': and Ingelram de Umfraville, five years' rent. For this purpose they were to be put in immediate possession of their lands: a moiety of the rent of which was to be allotted to them for their support: the other moiety to be paid to the king till the fines were discharged. At the same time the order of temporary banishment against Comyn, Graham, and the bishop of Glasgow, was recalled.⁹⁸ If it be considered that these men had given repeated proofs of their hostility to Edward, that they had sworn fealty to him and renounced it, had renewed their oaths and broken them again, we shall discover more reason to applaud his moderation, than to accuse his severity. The world has seen many conquerors: but it will be difficult to find one, who with such provocation has displayed an equal degree of lenity.

We have hitherto observed the conduct of Edward in his relations with foreign powers; have seen him wrest the province of Guienne from the grasp of the king of France, and extend his own authority over the kingdom of

⁹⁸ Rym. 968—970. Rot. Parl. i. 211. The money arising from these fines was to be spent in Scotland, for the benefit of the kingdom.

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Scotland and the principality of Wales. It is now time to attend to the manner in which he governed his patrimonial dominions, to notice the improvements which he introduced, the new laws which he established, and the expedients by which he was enabled to defray the expenses of his numerous campaigns.

I. For many of the improvements in the English constitution we are indebted more to views of personal interest than of enlightened policy. In the infancy of the feudal institutions the warrior was every thing, the merchant or tradesman nothing. But the latter, in the progress of civilization, gradually acquired property: property gave consideration; and during the civil wars of the last reign, both parties had found the assistance of the principal towns and cities as valuable as that of the most powerful barons. The earl of Leicester, as we have seen, had ventured to call their representatives to parliament: and his example was followed by the council on the death of Henry III. Besides the lords spiritual and temporal, four knights were summoned from each county, and four citizens from each city, to appear at Westminster, and swear fealty in the presence of the royal commissioners to the new king, who had not yet returned from the holy land.⁹⁹ Edward allowed ten years to pass before he had recourse to their services: but in 1283, during

Constitu-
tion of
parlia-
ment.

1273.
Jan. 14.

⁹⁹ Waverley, 227.

CHAP.
III.

his war in Wales, he compelled every man, possessing twenty pounds a year in land, to join the army, or furnish a substitute: and in order to procure an aid from men of smaller property, summoned a parliament of only two estates, the clergy and commons. The former were to assemble in the usual manner: the latter to consist of four knights from each shire, and two representatives from every city, borough, and market town. For their greater convenience they were divided into three bodies: the clergy and commons of the counties south of the Trent, assembled at Northampton: those of the northern counties at York, with the exception of the clergy and commons of the bishopric of Durham, who met in that city, probably in virtue of some privilege belonging to it as a county palatine. All three were opened by commissioners from the king, who remained in Wales: nor did any inconvenience arise from the distribution of the whole parliament into separate bodies, sitting in different places, as each had no other business to transact than to grant an aid from those whom it represented.¹⁰⁰ About eight months later, at the conclusion of the war, the king summoned another parliament: but the number of cities and boroughs that returned members was confined to twenty, and the writs were no longer directed to the sheriffs of the county, but to the

¹⁰⁰ See the different writs on this occasion in Hody, 372. 378. 380. 382.

mayors, bailiffs, and good men of the same cities and boroughs. In this parliament a different separation took place. The lords sat at Shrewsbury, and were employed in the trial and judgment of David prince of Wales: the clergy and commons assembled at Acton Burnel, and made the celebrated statute for the recovery of debts.¹⁰¹ From that period Edward appears to have reverted to the ancient custom of raising money by tallages: and eleven years elapsed before the representatives of the cities and boroughs were again summoned to parliament: but in 1295 writs were directed to no fewer than one hundred and twenty towns, of which some were too poor to defray the expenses of their deputies, and on that account obtained an exemption from so burdensome an honour. The king, however, had reason to be gratified with the experiment: if the barons and knights of the shire gave him an eleventh, the new members voted a seventh of their moveables: the precedent was too valuable to be allowed to fall into disuse: the deputies of the towns were now regularly summoned; and their grants, as if the proportion had been already fixed, usually amounted to one third more than those of the higher orders. This indeed was the principal object for which their presence was required: with matters of state, men in their humble situations could not be conversant:

¹⁰¹ Rym. ii. 249. St. 11. Ed. 1.

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III.

Form of
proceed-
ing.

and they were therefore occasionally dismissed, while the peers continued their sittings. But they derived one great advantage from their attendance: they could confer with each other on their grievances: they could make them known to the crown: and with their grants of money they generally coupled petitions for redress.

Of the form of proceeding in these ancient parliaments we know little. At the opening of that which was held in 1305, proclamation was made by the king's command in the great hall of Westminster, at the bar of chancery, before the courts of king's bench and exchequer, in the guildhall, and in Westchepe, in the following words: "Know all men, who wish to present petitions to this parliament, that they deliver them from day to day till the first Sunday in Lent (during one week) at the farthest, to sir Gilbert de Roubiry, master John de Caam, sir John de Kirkeby, and master John Bush, or any one of them, who are appointed to receive them to the aforesaid time at the farthest."¹⁰² At the termination of the session, the parliament was dissolved by the following proclamation: "All archbishops, bishops, and other prelates, earls, and barons, knights

¹⁰² The same persons were again appointed to receive petitions, and summoned for that purpose to another parliament held in September. The time for receiving petitions was fixed from the 15th of September to the 3d of October. Rym. ii. 966. Other persons were appointed to receive petitions from Scotland, Aquitaine, Ireland, and Guernsey.

“ of shires, citizens, and burgesses, and all
 “ others of the commons, that are come to this
 “ parliament, by command of our sovereign lord
 “ the king—the king gives them many thanks
 “ for coming, and wills that for the present they
 “ go back to their homes, so that they return
 “ forthwith, and without delay, whenever they
 “ shall be recalled, except the bishops, earls,
 “ barons, justices, and others of the king’s coun-
 “ cil, who must not depart without his special
 “ permission. To those who have business,
 “ leave is given to remain and to follow it.
 “ And the knights who are come for the shires,
 “ and the others for the cities and boroughs,
 “ may apply themselves to sir John de Kirkeby,
 “ who will give them briefs to receive their
 “ wages in their several counties.”¹⁰³

II. The reader has already observed the im-
 poverished state of the royal revenue under
 Henry III. As soon as Edward ascended the
 throne, he appointed in his first parliament
 commissioners to inquire into the state of the
 fiefs held of the crown, and by that measure
 obtained several forfeitures of considerable
 value. Soon afterwards the law officers of the
 crown sued out writs of quo warranto to the
 judges of assize, directing them to inquire by
 what title the landholders held their estates,
 and claimed the liberties and immunities which

Methods
of raising
money.

Writ of
quo war-
ranto.

¹⁰³ Ryley, 241. Rot. Parl. i. 159.

CHAP.
III.

they enjoyed. This inquest was a source of much vexation and general discontent. During the lapse of years, and amidst the revolutions of property, many families had lost their original deeds, and in that case their lands were adjudged to the king, and withheld from the owners, till the restoration had been purchased by an arbitrary fine. Even when the original deeds were produced, their validity was not admitted, till they had undergone the most rigorous scrutiny, and had been tried by every ordeal, which legal ingenuity could devise. At length the king consented to mitigate the rigour of his former instructions; and an undisturbed possession from the time of Richard I. was allowed to be pleaded as an effectual bar to the claims of the crown.¹⁰⁴

Exactions
by Edward.

The wars in which Edward engaged, necessarily involved him in extraordinary expenses; but the measures, by which he endeavoured to supply his wants, oppressive as they were at the time, ultimately proved a benefit to the subject, by provoking that resistance which confined the prerogative of the crown within more moderate limits. Under the pretence of undertaking a crusade for the recovery of the holy land, he obtained from pope Nicholas IV. the tenth of all ecclesiastical benefices for the six following years: and that the grant might be more pro-

¹⁰⁴ Waver. 235. 18 Ed. I. St. 2.

CHAP.
III.1294.
July.

ductive, the assessments were made by a new valuation taken upon oath. In 1294 he determined to make a serious effort for the recovery of Guienne; and to defray the expenses of the approaching campaign had recourse to a bold but despotic expedient. Commissioners were appointed to search the treasuries of every church and monastery: the monies deposited in them, whether they were the property of the monastic and clerical bodies, or had been placed there for greater security by private individuals, were entered on the rolls of the exchequer; and the principal sums, under the denomination of loans, were carried away for the use of the king. A few months later the citizens of London, assembled in common council, were induced by entreaties or threats to grant him a sixth of their personals: and commissioners were sent to all the other cities and boroughs to urge them to imitate the capital. The lords and knights of the shires reluctantly gave him a tenth: but he harangued the clergy himself, and finished by requiring half of their income, both from their lay fees, and their benefices. At this unprecedented demand they were filled with astonishment. A vigorous opposition was menaced: but their head, the archbishop of Canterbury, had previously left the kingdom: the dean of St. Paul's, whom they had sent to expostulate with the king, suddenly expired in his presence; and a knight, sir John Havering, un-

Refusal of
the clergy.

CHAP.
III.

expectedly entering the hall, addressed them in these words: "Reverend fathers, if there be
"any one among you, who dares to contradict
"the royal will, let him stand forth, that his
"person may be known and noticed as of one
"who has broken the king's peace." At this threat they submitted;¹⁰⁵ and the success of the experiment induced the king to repeat it in the following year. The representatives of the cities and boroughs were now summoned to parliament, and voted him a seventh. The lords granted an eleventh. From the clergy he demanded a third or fourth. They pleaded inability, but offered a tenth, which, after a scornful refusal and a delay of two months, was accepted. Alarmed by such heavy and repeated exactions, they began to look around for protection. Edward had recently employed the papal authority to enforce the payment of the tenths for the holy war: they had recourse to the same authority to shield them from the royal extortion: and Boniface VIII., at their prayer, published a bull, forbidding the clergy of any christian country to grant to laymen the revenues of their benefices without the permission of the holy see.¹⁰⁶ Under this plea, in the November

1296.
Feb. 24.

Nov. 3.

¹⁰⁵ West. 422. Wikes, 126. Walsing. 65. Knyghton, 2051. Duns. 629. Heming. 52. 54.

¹⁰⁶ In the bull the pope excommunicated all persons imposing unlawful burdens on the clergy, and all clergymen submitting to such burdens (Rym. ii. 706): but the next year (July 22d, 1297) in

CHAP.
III.1297.
Jan. 14.

following, they resisted the king's demand of a fifth; and obtained a respite till January, during which the royal seals were fixed on their barns. On the appointed day commissioners were sent to require their answer: and the archbishop rising addressed them in the following words: "You know, sirs, that under almighty God we have two lords, the one spiritual, the other temporal. Obedience is due to both, but more to the spiritual. We are willing to do every thing in our power: and will send deputies at our expense to consult the pontiff. We entreat you to carry this reply to the king, for we dare not speak to him ourselves." Edward had already formed his resolution. He consulted the lay peers, issued a proclamation of outlawry against the clergy both regular and secular, and took possession of all their lay fees, goods, and chattels for the benefit of the crown.¹⁰⁷ The lord chief justice of the king's bench thus announced the consequences in full court: "You that are here present, proctors and attorneys, for the archbishops, bishops, abbots, priors, and others of the clergy, take notice and ac-

They are
outlawed.
Feb. 12.

an explanatory bull he declared, that his former prohibition and censure did not extend to the voluntary aids granted by the clergy, nor to cases of necessity, when contributions were necessary for the safety of the kingdom, of which necessity the king and his council were the proper judges; nor to the diminution of any right, liberty, or custom, of which the king, barons, or temporal lords were in lawful possession Spond. 322. Brady, iii. 54.

¹⁰⁷ Apud Brady, iii. App. N^o. 13.

CHAP. "quaint your masters, that henceforth no man-
 III. "ner of justice shall be done to them in any of
 "the king's courts, for any injury how greivous
 "soever: but that justice shall be had against
 "them by every one that will complain and re-
 "quire it of us."¹⁰⁸

And sub-
 mit.

Feb. 6.

Before the king's writs were issued, the arch-
 bishop of York, with his clergy, had compounded
 by the grant of a fifth, to avert the royal displea-
 sure.¹⁰⁹ In the province of Canterbury the offi-
 cers of the crown took possession of all clerical
 property, both real and personal, with the excep-
 tion of what was contained within the precincts
 of churches and cemeteries: and at the same
 time intimation was made to the owners, that
 whatever was not redeemed before Easter, would
 be irrevocably forfeited to the king. The con-
 vocation assembled on midlent Sunday. Accord-
 ing to ancient custom, it divided itself into four
 bodies, composed of the archbishop and bishops,
 the abbots and priors, the deans and archdeacons,
 and the proctors of the parochial clergy. Before
 they began their deliberations, a royal message
 was received, forbidding them under the severest
 threats, to proceed to any measure prejudicial to
 the rights of the crown; or to pronounce any
 censure against persons employed in the king's
 service, or such as had already submitted to his
 will.¹¹⁰ At the same time they were reminded

Mar. 26.

¹⁰⁸ Thorn. 1965. Knyghton, 2491. Heming. 107, 108.

¹⁰⁹ Brady, iii. App. N^o. 19.

¹¹⁰ Ibid. N^o. 23.

that Edward no longer asked them for an aid, but required a heavy fine for their contempt of the royal authority. It was in vain that this nominal distinction was thrown out to open a way to submission. As long as they remained together, their constancy was invincible : they adhered to their former resolution, and determined to suffer with patience every privation. But the moment the convocation was dissolved, a few eagerly sought the royal favour : their example quickly gained proselytes : some paid the fine : others deposited sums of money in places where they might be seized by the officers of the exchequer : and others purchased at arbitrary prices letters of protection. Still there remained many, who refused to descend to such expedients, and contrived to weather out the storm through the aid of their relatives, or the commiseration of their neighbours. The archbishop, a man of inflexible resolution, retired with a single chaplain to a parsonage in the country, where he discharged the functions of the curate, and subsisted on the alms of the parishioners. Of his suffragans, the bishop of Lincoln alone imitated his example. But the friends of that prelate voluntarily subscribed the sum required by the king, and obtained the restoration of his temporalities.¹¹¹

Had Edward confined his rapacity to the clergy, he might perhaps have continued to despise their

Seizures of
wool, &c.

¹¹¹ Dunst. 651—655. West. 429. Wals. 68, 69. Heming. 109, 110.

CHAP.
III.

remonstrances: but the aids which he had annually raised on the freeholders, the tallages which he so frequently demanded of the cities and boroughs, and the additional duties which he extorted from the merchants, had excited a general spirit of discontent. Wool and hides were the two great articles of commerce, the exportation of which was allowed only to foreign merchants, and confined by law to eleven ports in England, and three in Ireland. In the beginning of his reign the duty had been raised to half a mark on each sack of wool: but the royal wants perpetually increased: and during his quarrel with the king of France, he required five marks for every sack of fine, three for every sack of coarse wool, and five for every last of hides. On one occasion he extorted from the merchants a loan of the value of all the wool, which they exported: on two others, he seized and sold both wool and hides for his own profit. He even stretched his rapacious hands to the produce of the soil, and the live stock of his subjects: and to provision his army in Guienne, issued precepts to each sheriff to collect by assessment on the landholders of his county, a certain number of cattle, and two thousand quarters of wheat.¹¹² Though this requisition was accompanied with a promise of future payment, the patience of the nation was exhausted. Consultations began to

¹¹² Knyght. 2501. Dun. v. 418. Wals. 69. Heming. 110, 111.

CHAP.
III.1297.
Feb. 24.

be held ; and preparations were made for resistance. Edward had assembled two bodies of troops, with one of which he intended to sail to Flanders, the other he destined to reinforce the army in Guienne. At Salisbury he gave the command of the latter to Bohun earl of Hereford, the constable, and to Bigod earl of Norfolk, the mareschal of England : but both these noblemen refused the appointment, on the alleged ground, that by their office they were bound only to attend on the king's person. Edward, in a paroxysm of rage, addressing himself to the mareschal, exclaimed : " By the everlasting God, sir earl, you shall go or hang." " By the everlasting God, sir king," replied Bigod, " I will neither go nor hang." Hereford and Norfolk immediately departed : they were followed by thirty bannerets, and fifteen hundred knights : and the royal officers, intimidated by their menaces, ceased to levy the purveyance. Edward saw that it was necessary to dissemble, and summoned some, requested others, of his military tenants to meet him in arms in London.¹¹³

The two earls, in concert with Winchelsey, the archbishop of Canterbury, had arranged their plan of resistance to the royal exactions. On the appointed day the constable, and John de Segrave, as deputy mareschal (Bigod himself was detained at home by sickness) attended the

Opposition of the earls of Hereford and Norfolk.

¹¹³ Heming. 112.

CHAP.
III.

July 8.

king's court: but when they were required to perform their respective duties,¹¹⁴ returned a refusal in writing, on the ground that they had not received a legal summons, but only a general invitation. Edward appointed a new constable and mareschal; and, to divide and weaken his opponents, sought to appease the clergy, and to move the commiseration of the people.

July 11.

He received the primate with kindness, ordered the restoration of his lands, and named him one of the council to prince Edward, whom he had appointed regent. On a platform before the entrance of Westminster hall, accompanied by his son, the archbishop, and the earl of Warwick, he harangued the people. He owned that the

July 14.

burdens, which he had laid on them, were heavy: but protested that it had not been less painful to him to impose, than it had been to others to bear them. Necessity was his only apology. His object had been to preserve himself and his liege men from the cruelty and rapacity of the Welsh, the Scots, and the French, who not only sought *his* crown, but also thirsted after *their* blood. In such case it was better to sacrifice a part than to lose the whole. "Behold," he concluded, "I am going to expose myself to danger for you. If I return, re-

¹¹⁴ These duties were to call all the military tenants before them, enrol their names, the number of their followers, the time they were to serve, &c. Rym. ii. 783.

“ceive me again, and I will make you amends :
 “if I fall, here is my son ; place him on the
 “throne ; and his gratitude shall reward your
 “fidelity.” At these words the king burst into
 tears : the archbishop was equally affected : the
 contagion ran through the multitude : and shouts
 of loyalty and approbation persuaded Edward
 that he might still depend on the allegiance of
 his people. This exhibition was followed by
 writs to the sheriffs, ordering them to protect
 the clergy from injury, and to maintain them in
 the possession of their lands.¹¹⁵

CHAP.
 III.

July 1.

He now ventured to proceed as far as Win-
 chelsea on his way to Flanders. But here he
 was alarmed by reports of the designs of his
 opponents, and ordered letters to be sent to
 every county, stating the origin of his quarrel
 with the two earls, asserting that he had never
 refused any petition for redress, and promising
 to confirm the charter of liberties and charter
 of the forests, in return for the liberal aid of an
 eighth which had been granted by the council
 in London.¹¹⁶ Soon afterwards a paper was put
 into his hands, purporting to be the remon-
 strance of the archbishops, bishops, abbots,
 and priors, the earls, barons, and whole com-
 monalty of England. In it they complained
 that the last summons had been worded am-

Their
 remon-
 strance.

Aug. 12.

¹¹⁵ Compare Hemingford, 113, 114. West. 70. Knyghton, 2510,
 with the writs in Rymer, ii. 733, and Brady, iii. App. N^o. 29, 30.

¹¹⁶ Rym. *ibid*.

CHAP.
III.

bighously : that it called on them to accompany the king to Flanders, a country in which they were not bound to serve by the custom of their tenures : that, even if they were, they had been so impoverished by aids, tallages, and unlawful seizures, as to be enable to bear the expense : that the liberties granted to them by the two charters had been repeatedly violated : that the “ evil toll ” (the duty) on wool amounted alone to one fifth of the whole income of the land : and that to undertake an expedition to Flanders, in the existing circumstances, was imprudent, since it would expose the kingdom without protection to the inroads of the Welsh and Scots. Edward replied, that he could return no answer on matters of such high importance without the advice of his council, a part of which had already sailed for Flanders : that if the remonstrants would accompany him, he would accept it as a favour ; if they refused, he trusted they would raise no disturbance during his absence. Before his departure he appointed commissioners in each county with powers to require security from all persons for the payment of aids due to the crown, and to imprison the publishers of false reports, the disturbers of the peace, and such of the clergy as might presume to pronounce censures against the royal officers for the discharge of their duty.¹¹⁷

Aug. 19.

¹¹⁷ Heming, 115—117. Knyght, 2511. Wals. 71. Rym. ii. 738.

At length the king sailed, accompanied by the barons and knights who had espoused his cause: and two days later Bohun and Bigod with a numerous retinue proceeded to the exchequer. The constable, in presence of the treasurer and judges, complained of the king's extortions, of his illegal seizures of private property, and of the enormous duty imposed upon wool: and forbade them, in the name of the baronage of England, to levy the last eighth which had been granted by the great council, because it had been voted without his knowledge and concurrence, and that of his friends.¹¹⁸ From the exchequer they rode to the guildhall, where they called upon the citizens to join in the common cause, and to aid in wresting the confirmation of the national liberties from a reluctant and despotic sovereign. The tears which the Londoners had shed during Edward's harangue, were now dried up: considerations of interest suppressed the impulse of pity: and they gave assurances of their co-operation to the barons, who immediately retired to their respective counties. Both during their progress to the capital, and their return from it, they had marched in military array. But at the same time they had been careful to preserve the

CHAP.
III.

The king
sails to
Flanders.
Aug. 22.

Aug. 24.

¹¹⁸ Edward said it had been granted by the great lords, who were with him: les grantz seigneurs, qui n'adguers firent ove lui (Rym. ii. 784): Bohun objected, that his friends had no knowledge of it. De conscientia suorum non emanasse. West. 431.

CHAP.
III.

The prince
grants the
statute de
tallagio
non conce-
dendo.

peace; and had threatened by proclamation to punish every lawless aggressor with the immediate amputation of a hand, or the loss of the head, according to the quality of the offence.¹¹⁹

The king was soon informed of these proceedings, and ordered the barons of the exchequer to disregard the prohibition. But in a few weeks his obstinacy was subdued by a succession of untoward events. The people and clergy universally favoured the cause of the earls: the Scots after their victory at Stirling, had burst into the northern counties: and Edward himself lay at Ghent in Flanders, unable to return to the protection of the kingdom, and too weak to face the superior force of the French king. In these circumstances the lords who composed the council of the young prince, invited the archbishop, six prelates, twenty-three abbots and priors, the constable and mareschal and eight barons to treat with them on matters of the greatest moment, and summoned a parliament to meet at London a week later, and witness the confirmation of the two charters.¹²⁰ In the conferences which preceded, the two parties, though opposed in appearance, had the same interests and the same views: a form of peace (so it was called) was speedily arranged: and to the ancient enactments of the

Sep. 30.

¹¹⁹ West, *ibid.* Heming. 117. Knyght. 2512. Wals. 72.

¹²⁰ Brady, *Hist.* iii. App. N^o. 33. Rym. ii. 793.

charters were appended the following most important additions. “ No tallage or aid shall
“ henceforth be laid or levied by us or our heirs
“ in this our realm, without the good will and
“ common assent of the archbishops, bishops
“ and other prelates, the earls, barons, knights
“ burgesses, and other free men in our realm.—
“ No officer of us or our heirs shall take corn,
“ wool, hides, or other goods of any person
“ whatsoever, without the good will and assent
“ of the owner of such goods.—Nothing shall
“ henceforth be taken on the sack of wool
“ under the name or pretence of the evil toll.—
“ We also will and grant for us and our heirs
“ that all both clergy and laity of our realm
“ shall have their laws, liberties, and free cus-
“ toms, as freely and wholly as at any time
“ when they had them best; and if any statutes
“ have been made or customs introduced by us
“ or our ancestors contrary to them or to any
“ article in the present charter, we will and
“ grant that such statutes and customs be null
“ and void for ever.—We have moreover remit-
“ ted to the earl constable, and earl mareschal and
“ all their associates, and to all those who have
“ not accompanied us to Flanders, all rancour
“ and ill will, and all manner of offences which
“ they may have committed against us or ours
“ before the making of this present charter.—
“ And for the greater assurance of this thing
“ we will and grant for us and our heirs, that all

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III.

“ archbishops and bishops in England for ever,
 “ shall twice in the year after the reading
 “ of this charter in their cathedral churches
 “ excommunicate, and cause in their parochial
 “ churches to be excommunicated, all those,
 “ that knowingly shall do or cause to be done
 “ any thing against the tenor, force and effect
 “ of any article contained in it.”¹²¹

The king
 forced to
 confirm it.
 Oct. 10.

When the parliament assembled, these additions to the charter were received with enthusiasm: and, provided the king would assent to them, the laity voted him an eighth, the clergy of Canterbury a tenth, and the clergy of York a fifth. The prince, by a public instrument, took the earls and their associates under his protection: and the lords of the council bound themselves to indemnify them against the effects of the royal displeasure. A common letter was written to the king, soliciting him to appease all differences by giving his assent, and assuring him that his faithful barons were ready at his command either to join him in Flanders, or to march against his enemies in Scotland: but at the same time requiring in a tone of defiance an answer against the sixth day of December. It cost the haughty mind of Edward several struggles before he could prevail on himself to submit: three days were spent in useless delibera-

¹²¹ Heming. 141. In the printed statutes it is placed by mistake under the 34th year of the king.

tion and complaints : but at last with a reluctant hand he signed the confirmation of the two charters with the additional articles, and a separate pardon for the earls and their followers.¹²²

CHAP.
III.

Nov. 5.

This was perhaps the most important victory which had hitherto been gained over the crown. By investing the people with the sole right of raising the supplies, it armed them with the power of checking the extravagance, and controlling the despotism, of their monarchs. Whatever jealousy might be entertained of Edward's intentions, his conduct wore at first the semblance of sincerity. As soon as an armistice had been concluded between him and the king of France, he returned to England, and appointed commissioners to inquire into the illegal seizures which had been made previously to his departure. They were to be divided into two classes. Where the officers had acted without warrant, they were at their own cost to indemnify the sufferers : where the goods had been taken by the royal orders, their value was to be certified into the exchequer, and prompt payment was to be made.¹²³ Still it was suspected that he only waited for a favourable moment to cancel the concessions which had been wrung from him by necessity : and it was whispered that among his confidential friends he had

The confirmation is repeated.

1298.
Mar. 14.

April 4.

¹²² Stat. 25 Ed. I. St. 1. Brady, iii. App. N^o. 34. Knyght. 2522. —2524. Heming. 138—143. West. 431. Wals. 73, 74.

¹²³ Rym. ii. 813.

CHAP.

III.

May.

1299.
March.

laughed at them as being of no force, because they had been made in a foreign country, where he possessed no authority. When he met his parliament at York, the earls of Hereford and Norfolk required that he should ratify his confirmation of the charters. He objected the necessity of hastening to oppose the Scots, solemnly promised to comply with their request on his return, and brought forward the bishop of Durham and three earls, who swore "on his soul" that he should fulfil his engagements.¹²⁴ The victory of Falkirk and a long series of success gave a lustre to his arms; but when the parliament assembled the next year, the king was reminded of his promise. His reluctance employed every artifice to deceive the vigilance, or exhaust the patience, of the two earls. He retired from the parliament in anger: he returned and proposed modifications: at last he ratified his former concessions, but with the addition of a clause, which by saving the rights of the crown, virtually annulled every provision in favour of the subject. Bohun and Bigod instantly departed with their adherents: and the king, to ascertain the sentiments of the people, ordered the sheriffs to assemble the citizens in the cemetery of St. Paul's, and to read to them the new confirmation of the charters. The lecture was repeatedly interrupted by shouts of approbation:

¹²⁴ Wals. 76. Heming. 159.

but when the illusory clause was recited, the air rang with expressions of discontent, and curses were poured on the head of the prince, who had thus disappointed the expectations of his people. Edward took the alarm; summoned a new parliament to meet him within a fortnight; granted every demand; and appointed a commission of three bishops, three earls, and three barons, to ascertain the real boundaries of the royal forests.¹²⁵

CHAP
III.

April.

Though the earl of Hereford died soon after the dissolution of parliament, his partisans did not relax in their exertions. In the next session they complained that the law was but a dead letter, and that the royal officers refused to carry it into execution. To satisfy them Edward was compelled to repeat his concessions, and to grant additional articles, by which it was enacted that the charters should be publicly read in the sheriff's court four times every year, and that three knights of each county should be elected by the freeholders, and be empowered by the king to punish summarily every offence against them, for which a remedy had not been provided at common law.¹²⁶ During the year the perambulation of the forests was completed, and in the following parliament it was enacted, that "whatever ac-

With new
additions.

1300.
March.

1301.
Feb. 14.

¹²⁵ West. 431. Henning. 163. Stat. 27 Ed. I. St. 1.

¹²⁶ Stat. 28 Ed. I. St. 3.

CHAP.
III.

“ cording to the return of the perambulators
 “ was situated without the forests should re-
 “ main so, and whatever was situated within
 “ them, should be accounted forest land for
 “ ever.” ¹²⁷

The king's
 insincerity.

Notwithstanding the facility with which Edward had of late assented to the demands of the barons, he cherished a secret hope of being one day able to resume those claims, the surrender of which had been wrested from him by the necessity of appeasing his subjects. In 1304 Scotland was subdued. He had already intimidated his former opponents by successively punishing them for their opposition to his interests. The earl mareschal, and the son of the earl constable, had been induced to surrender their estates and honours into his hands:¹²⁸ and the principal of the patriot barons under different pretences had been compelled to make him considerable presents.¹²⁹ From Stirling, as

1304.
 May.

¹²⁷ Brady, iii. 72.

¹²⁸ Edward returned his estates and honours to the earl of Norfolk, but limited to him and his issue by his wife Alice. He died three years after without issue, by which both reverted to the crown. Bohun surrendered his estates and honours, Oct. 3, 1302, and recovered them two years later on his marriage with Elizabeth, the king's seventh daughter, and relict of the earl of Holland. Brady, iii. 74. 76.

¹²⁹ West. 452. Winchelsey had the honour of suffering with his friends. Edward charged the primate with having entered into a treasonable conspiracy during his absence in Flanders. The pontiff suspended him provisionally from his functions, and summoned him to plead his cause in the papal court. He remained two years in exile: but returned with honour after the death of the king. Birchington praises him for his resistance to Edward'

if his concessions and confirmations of the charters had never existed, he sent commissioners to raise a tallage on all the cities and boroughs of his demesne, according to their wealth and sufficiency, either by a capitation-tax, or an impost in common, as might be most to his advantage. Nor was this illegal measure resisted or resented. In the next parliament he silenced the complaints of the barons by granting them permission to raise a similar tallage on their own tenants.¹³⁰ Before he left Scotland he sent a deputation to the pope. Its object was a profound secret at the time, but has been revealed to posterity by the papal answer. The envoys informed his holiness that, during the king's absence in Flanders, a conspiracy had been formed against him by some of his barons, who extorted from him certain unjust concessions, in violation of the oath which he had taken at his coronation; and, exhibiting to him an attested copy of the bull by which Clement IV. had annulled the different compacts between Henry III. and the earl of Leicester, they prayed that he would imitate the conduct of his predecessor. The answer, with which they returned, declared

1305
Dec. 29.

exactions, and his constancy in defending the rights of the people. Regem in parliamentis et conciliis super suis abusionibus redarguit, et ad omne bonum quod potuit, monuit et induxit, non permittens ipsum errare, quatenus scire potuit, quin ipsum reprimeret, ut ab oppressionibus populi et exactionibus desisteret, et bonis operibus inhaereret. Ang. Sac. i. 17.

¹³⁰ Brady, iii. 97. Rot. Parl. i. 161.

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III.

all such concessions invalid ; but this declaration proceeded on the supposition that the concessions were contrary to the rights of the crown, which the king had sworn to transmit to his posterity, and was accompanied with a clause saving to his subjects all the rights of which they were previously in possession.¹³¹ Whether it were that with these limitations the papal rescript did not fully meet the king's wishes, or that he was intimidated by the rebellion of the Scots, he made no public use of its contents : but suffered the concessions, galling as they were, to remain on the statute roll at his death, and to descend to future sovereigns as the recognised law of the land.¹³² Thus, after a long struggle, was won from an able and powerful monarch the most valuable of the privileges enjoyed by the commons of England at the present day. If we are indebted to the patriotism of cardinal Langton, and the barons at Runnymede, the framers of the great charter ; we ought equally to revere the memory of archbishop Winchelsea, and the earls of Hereford and Norfolk. The former erected barriers against the abuse of the sovereign authority : the latter fixed the liberties of the subject on a sure and permanent foundation.

But if the king met with opposition in his attempts to plunder his own people, there was one

¹³¹ Rym. ii. 972. 378.

¹³² Stat. 34 Ed. 1. St. 5.

CHAP.
III.King per-
secutes
the Jews.

race of men, whom he was permitted to plunder and oppress with impunity. The Jews had been originally introduced into England under William the conqueror: and, though they were fettered with restrictions, subject to extortion, and often murdered by the populace, had in the course of two centuries, considerably increased both in numbers and opulence. They were to be found in all commercial towns: their principal residence was a portion of London, distinguished by the name of "the Jewry." In spiritual matters they obeyed a high priest of their own choice, but confirmed by a patent from the crown: in temporals they were placed under the jurisdiction of a christian officer named by the king, and called the justiciary of the Jews. It has been already noticed, that they professed to lend money upon interest: and the fines and forfeitures, the aids and tallages of the feudal governments, afforded them ample opportunity for the exercise of their favourite pursuit. In Henry, though it cost them enormous sums, they had found a protector: Edward, and it is difficult to account for his policy, always professed himself their enemy and persecutor. It is easy to account for the hatred of the people, who considered them as an accursed race, the descendants of those who had crucified the Saviour, and as usurers, accumulating riches at the expense of the christians. But why should the king, superior as he must have been to the

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III.

prejudices of the vulgar, carry his enmity further than any of his predecessors, and at last deprive himself of a resource, to which they had so often and so successfully applied? In the first year after his coronation the Jews were forbidden to erect synagogues, to hold fiefs or any free tenement, and to demand interest for the loan of money: every Israelite of the age of seven years was commanded to sew on his outer garment as a mark of distinction two tablets of woollen cloth of a yellow colour, six inches long and three inches broad: and all of both sexes above the age of twelve were subjected to a capitation-tax of three pennies to be paid annually at Easter.¹³³ Excluded from their accustomed sources of profit, this money-making race adopted another expedient: they clipped the coin, a fraud of which the detection was difficult, as long as the silver penny might be lawfully divided into halves and farthings. If we may judge from the punishment, the crime must have been almost universal among them. On the same day

1279.

¹³³ Rym. ii. 83. Stat. at large, x. App. p. 23. Duns. 429. 431. Wikes, 103. The badge was meant to represent the two tables of the law. Waver. 231. The tax was paid as an acknowledgment that they were the king's slaves, au Roi, que serfs ils sont. Stat. ibid. They could plead or be impleaded in none but the king's courts, because they were his slaves—they were not to pay tallages on account of their chattels with other merchants, but at the king's pleasure because they were his slaves.—As, however, it was the will of the holy church that they should live and be protected, he took them under his protection, and granted them his peace. Ibid.

all the Jews suspected of the offence were apprehended: the discovery of clipped money in their possession was taken as an evidence of their guilt: the trials occupied a special commission for some months: two hundred and eighty of both sexes were hanged in London, and perhaps as many more in the country: and the houses and property of the sufferers were confiscated to the crown.¹³⁴

The sufferings, however, of this unhappy people were not yet at an end. In 1287, on an appointed day, all the Jews in England, without any distinction of age or sex, were arrested, thrown into prison, and confined, till they had purchased their liberty by a present to the king of twelve thousand pounds.¹³⁵ Three years later, in 1290, their doom was fixed. The whole race was ordered by proclamation to quit the kingdom for ever, within the space of two months, and under the penalty of death. The number of the exiles was sixteen thousand, five hundred and eleven, who were furnished with passports by the king, and allowed to carry with them a competent supply for their journey: but their houses and lands, treasures and debts, were confiscated for the benefit of the crown. It is said

CHAP.
III.

* They are
banished.
1287.
May 2.

Aug. 31.

Nov. 1.

¹³⁴ West. 409. Duns. 450. Wals. 48. Several christians were also indicted for the same offence. Some were executed, others redeemed their lives. Soon after a new coinage was issued. West. *ibid.* Wikes, 103. Dun. 452.

¹³⁵ Wikes, 114.

CHAP.
III.

Improve-
ments in
the laws.

that during their passage, many perished through the hatred or rapacity of the mariners, of whom several were afterwards convicted, and suffered the punishment due to their crime.¹³⁶

III. Notwithstanding these instances of oppression, Edward has obtained the name of the English Justinian, from the improvements which were made during his reign in the national code, and the administration of justice: improvements for which his people were perhaps as much indebted to his necessities as his wisdom: since they were always granted at the request of his parliament, and purchased with the vote of a valuable aid. That the courts of king's bench, exchequer, and common pleas, might not encroach on each other, the limits of their respective jurisdictions were accurately defined: and that the courts christian might not assume the undue cognizance of temporal rights, they were confined to matrimonial and testamentary causes, the non-payment of customary tithes, perjury, defamation, mortuaries, and the infliction of public penance. The institution of itinerary judges was retained: and, for the more prompt administration of justice, it was enacted that two of the number, aided by one or more discreet knights, should hold assizes in each county thrice in the year.¹³⁷ These officers might not be deficient in learning or talents; but there is

¹³⁶ Duns. 584. Wikes, 122.

¹³⁷ Stat. 13 Ed. I. c. 3. |

great reason to doubt their integrity. With small salaries they amassed immense riches; and when the king, after an absence of three years, returned to England in 1289, all the judges were apprehended, and indicted for bribery. Two only were acquitted. Weyland, the chief justice of the king's bench, was found guilty of having first instigated his servants to commit murder, and then screened them from punishment. He abjured the realm, and all his property, both real and personal, was adjudged to the king.¹³⁸ Stratton the chief baron of the exchequer, suffered a long imprisonment, was deprived of his lay fees, and paid a fine of thirty-four thousand marks. Sir Ralf de Hengham the grand justiciary, and regent during the king's absence, was amerced in the sum of seven thousand; the rest in smaller sums, amounting in the aggregate to twenty-four thousand marks.

CHAP.
III.

Punish-
ment of
judges.

For the preservation of the peace was enacted the celebrated statute of Winchester, which re-

Justices of
peace.

¹³⁸ The history of Weyland is curious. He escaped from custody, disguised himself, and was admitted a novice among the friars minors at St. Edmundsbury. His retreat was however discovered: but as he was in a sanctuary, forty days were allowed him according to law, after which the introduction of provisions into the convent was prohibited. The friars soon left it through want: Weyland followed them, and was conducted to the tower. In the king's council the option was given to him to stand his trial, to be imprisoned for life, or to abjure the realm. He chose the latter: and having walked barefoot and bareheaded with a crucifix in his hand to the sea side, was immediately transported. See Dunst. 573—577. Wikes, 118, 119.

CHAP.

III.

, {

vived the ancient custom of requiring sureties from strangers and lodgers, established the watch and ward from sunset to sunrise in all cities and boroughs; regulated the hue and cry; and ordered all hedges and underwood to be cleared away to the distance of two hundred feet on each side of the high roads leading from town to town, that they might not afford shelter to robbers.¹³⁹ These regulations, however, were ill observed, till the king issued a commission to certain knights in every shire, authorizing them to enforce the provisions of the act, and to call to their aid the posse of the sheriff as often as it might be requisite. The utility of these commissioners was soon ascertained: they were gradually armed with more extensive powers: and instead of conservators were at last styled justices of the peace. But during Edward's expeditions into Scotland they were unable to suppress the bands of ruffians, who assembled in different places, hired themselves to the best bidder, and became the executioners of private vengeance, or the ministers of individual rapacity. These excesses, however, ceased with the submission of the Scots. An extraordinary commission of justices of traylebaton (so they were called from their staves of office) proceeded from county to county, and by condemning, after a summary trial, many of the offenders to

1305.
April 6.

¹³⁹ Stat. 13 Ed. I. St. 2.

the gallows, so intimidated the rest, that they precipitately quitted the kingdom.¹⁴⁰

CHAP.
III.

Creation
of estates
tail.

During Edward's reign several alterations were made in the laws respecting the transmission or alienation of real property, which are wholly or partially in force at the present day. Originally lands were given to a man and the heirs of his body, in failure of which heirs they were to return to the donor: but it had been held by the judges that on the birth of an heir the condition was fulfilled. The feoffee could then aliene as he pleased, and he was generally careful to make his fee-simple absolute, so that it might descend by common law to his heirs general. The barons complained that by this expedient the will of the donor, and the rights of his successors, were unjustly defeated: and a law was enacted, taking from the feoffee the power of disposing of his lands, and ordaining that they should descend in the terms of the original grant and in failure of issue revert to the donor, or the heirs of the donor. The object of this statute was to preserve the rights of the lord: its effect, though that does not appear to have been contemplated by the legislature, was to secure the transmission of estates through the different generations of the same family, by depriving the actual possessor of the power of alienation.¹⁴¹

Another very important alteration regarded

Manors
prohibited.

¹⁴⁰ Ryley, 280.

¹⁴¹ Stat. 13 Ed. I. c. 1.

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the conveyance of lands. At the commencement of Edward's reign, every tenant, who possessed freehold lands of inheritance, could convert his property into a manor, with manorial courts; profits, and immunities, by granting or selling a portion of it to two or more individuals, to be held by them and their heirs for ever, under free or military service. By this system of subinfeudation manors were multiplied beyond measure: and the great barons discovered that they were deprived of the escheats, reliefs, and wardships of the lesser freeholders, which by the condition of their tenures were reserved to the immediate lords of whom they held their lands. Repeated complaints gave birth to the statute of the eighteenth of this prince, by which the creation of new manors was prohibited, and it was enacted, that in all sales or grants of land for the future, the new feoffee should hold his land, not of the individual from whom he received or purchased it, but of the chief lord of the fee. Hence it is, that at the present day no claim of manorial rights is admitted, unless they have existed as such since the year 1290.¹⁴²

Statutes of
mortmain.

I shall notice only one more alteration, which the king appears to have had much at heart, and in which he was in a great measure defeated by the ingenuity of his opponents; I mean the statutes enacted to prevent corporate bodies, eccle-

¹⁴² Stat. 18 Ed. I. c. 1. Rot. Parl. tom. i. p. 41.

siastical or secular, from acquiring lands in mortmain. For as such bodies cannot die, the immediate lords of those lands were deprived of the escheats, reliefs, wardships, and other feudal profits, which they derived from the decease of individual proprietors. To remedy the inconvenience bodies corporate had long been incapacitated from acquiring lands without the previous consent both of the mesne lord, and the king: but they had found means to evade the prohibition by taking leases for very long terms of years, or by purchasing estates, which were held bona fide of themselves. In 1279 a statute was passed, by which all alienations in mortmain, by whatever art, or under whatever pretext they might be effected, were forbidden on pain of forfeiture to the immediate lord, or, in his default during a year, to the lord paramount, and in default of both to the king.¹⁴³ But an expedient was soon discovered by which the provisions of the statute were eluded. A secret understanding took place between the parties: the body wishing to obtain the land set up a fictitious title: and the real proprietor, by collusion, suffered judgment to be given against him. This was the origin of common recoveries, which are still in use. The king was indignant when he saw himself foiled in this

¹⁴³ Stat. 7 Ed. 1 St. 2. There are, however, several instances in which the king granted licences for the alienation of lands in mortmain. See Rym. ii. 664. 1004.

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manner, and in 1285 a new statute was passed, by which all such cases were sent to a jury, and wherever fraud was discovered the land was forfeited to the immediate lord.¹⁴⁴ Still the ingenuity of the clergy, who were principally interested in the contest, was not exhausted. They distinguished between the possession and the use: estates were no longer conveyed to the body corporate, but to others for its use: and thus, while the seizin of land was in the nominal feoffee, all its profits and emoluments came to the possession of those for whom the vender or grantor originally intended it.¹⁴⁵

State of
Scotland.

It had employed Edward thirteen years to forge the fetters of Scotland: in less than six months she was again free. To understand this important revolution, we must advert to the rival houses of Baliol and Bruce. Baliol was dead: and before his death he had more than once renounced for himself and his posterity all right to the crown. As the renunciation had been made in captivity, and was the effect of compulsion, it would probably have been disregarded by the Scots: but his only son was a prisoner in the tower of London, and the task of supporting the rights of the family devolved on the next heir, John Comyn of Badenoch, the son of Marjory, Baliol's sister: a nobleman already distinguished by his efforts to recover the

¹⁴⁴ Stat. 13 Ed. I. c. 32.

¹⁴⁵ See Stat. 15 Rich. II. c. 5.

independence of his country. From the fatal battle of Falkirk to the last expedition of Edward, he had directed as guardian the councils of Scotland. To the king of England he had long been an object of peculiar jealousy: at the late pacification a sentence of temporary banishment had been pronounced against him; and, if that sentence had been recalled, he had still been fined in thrice the amount of his yearly income.

The pretensions of Robert Bruce, the original competitor, had descended to his grandson, of the same name, and about twenty-three years of age. The Bruces, animated by a spirit of opposition to the Baliols, had hitherto done little for their country. The grandfather had been the first to acknowledge the superiority of the king of England: the son, when Baliol drew the sword of independence, hastened to join the hostile banners of Edward: and the grandson, unable to discern his real interest, had continually oscillated between the two parties. As often as a gleam of success enlivened the hopes of the patriots, he became a willing convert to the same holy cause: at the approach of Edward, the apostate was always eager to make his peace with the conqueror, and to redeem his past disloyalty by new services. At the present time he enjoyed the favour and confidence of that prince, who had consulted him on the late settlement of Scotland, and had remitted

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Murder of
Comyn.
1306.
Feb. 10.

to him the payment of the relief due for the lands which his father had held in England.

It chanced that both Comyn and Bruce arrived at Dumfries about the same time, probably to meet the new justiciaries who were holding their court in the town. Bruce requested a private conference in the choir of the church of the Minorites: and the very selection of the place warrants a suspicion that the two chiefs had reason to be on their guard against each other. Whether it were the consequence of premeditated treachery, or only the sudden impulse of passion, will be for ever unknown: but they met; the conversation grew warm; and Bruce plunged his dirk into the breast of Comyn, saw him fall, and hurried to the church door. He appeared pale and agitated: and to the inquiries of his attendants replied: "I think I have killed Comyn."—"You only think so!" exclaimed one of the number, and hastened with his companions into the church. Comyn still breathed, and with proper care might have lived. The friars had conveyed him behind the altar: and his uncle, sir Robert Comyn, had been called to his assistance. At the approach of the assassins sir Robert drew his sword, and was slain by Christopher Seaton, the brother-in-law of Bruce. Kilpatrick springing forwards to Comyn, plunged his dagger into the heart of the unresisting victim.¹⁴⁶

¹⁴⁶ Compare Hem. 219. West. 453. Knight. 2494. Walsing. 91. Ford. xii. 7. Hailes, i. 292. The cause assigned by the old

This is all that is known, perhaps more than is really known, respecting the cause, and the circumstances of the murder. But the Scottish historians are better informed. They tell us, that Comyn had bound himself by oath and indenture to support the claim of Bruce to the crown: that he afterwards betrayed the secret to Edward, who one evening over the bottle revealed his intention of putting the whole family to death: that the earl of Gloucester gave Bruce a hint of his danger, by sending him a pair of spurs and twelve silver pennies: that the patriot, to prevent his being tracked in the snow, ordered the shoes of his horses to be inverted, rode through bye ways from London to Lochmaben in seven days, and meeting on the road a foot-traveller of suspicious appearance, killed him, and found on his person letters from Comyn to Edward: that he went immediately to Dumfries, sent for Comyn to the church, shewed him the intercepted letters, and, receiving from him the lie, dispatched the traitor.¹⁴⁷ This ro-

poet, whose lines are preserved by Fordun, is the ancient quarrel between the two families.

Causa suæ mortis est vetus discordia fortis.—Ford. xii. 7.

¹⁴⁷ Fordun, xii. 5—7. Bocce, xii. Buch. viii. The genius of Hume has improved and embellished this tale. He first gilds the spurs sent by the earl of Gloucester, and changes into a purse of gold the paltry present of twelve pennies. Then, having conducted the hero to Dumfries with the Scottish writers, he adopts the opinion of the English, that the dispute arose respecting the succession to the crown, and therefore introduces Bruce to a council of Scottish nobles most providentially assembled at the very

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mantic tale was long believed by the gratitude and partiality of the people: but later writers of the same nation have proved that in all its circumstances it is liable to strong objections, in many is contradicted by satisfactory evidence. There can be little doubt that it is a fiction, purposely invented to wash the guilt of blood from the character of Robert I., and to justify a transaction, which led to the recovery of Scottish independence.

Edward
vows re-
venge;

Edward was rather irritated than alarmed at the intelligence. That so foul a murder could overturn his superiority, was an idea which never entered his mind: but, enfeebled as he was by years and disease, he looked forward with reluctance to the possibility of a war. Orders were sent to his lieutenant Aymar de Valence earl of Pembroke, to chastise the presumption of Bruce: and all the young nobility of England were summoned to receive, in company with prince Edward, the honour of knight-hood. The more distinguished he admitted into the palace: for the accommodation of the others, tents were erected in the gardens of the Temple; and all received from the royal wardrobe vests of silk, and mantles of purple and

moment, astonishes them with the beauty, the address and the eloquence of the young patriot, composes for him an elegant harangue, and puts a string of cautious objections into the mouth of Comyn. The assembly breaks up: Bruce, in a fit of indignant patriotism, pursues Comyn, and the murder is perpetrated.—But all this again is fiction!

gold. The king was too weak to expose himself to the heat caused by the crowd. He knighted his son in the hall of the palace: and the young prince, in the abbey church, conferred the same honour on his two hundred and seventy companions. It was the custom for the new knight to make a vow, the object of which was generally suggested by the circumstances of the time: but the vows of chivalry were not taken on the gospels, but, ridiculous as it may appear, in the presence of a peacock, or pheasant, or other bird of beautiful plumage. During the royal banquet, the minstrels placed on the table two swans in nets of gold. The king immediately vowed before God and the swans, that he would revenge the death of Comyn, and punish the perfidy of the rebels: and then addressing the company, besought them, in the event of his death on the expedition, to keep his body unburied, till they had enabled his son to accomplish his vow. The son swore, that he would not sleep two nights in the same place, till he had entered Scotland to execute his father's commands: the rest applauded his oath, and imitated his example. The next morning the prince, with his knights companions, departed for the borders: Edward himself followed by easy journeys; and his military tenants received writs to join him at Carlisle in the beginning of July.¹⁴⁸

¹⁴⁸ West. 433. Trivet, 343. Rym. ii. 1052. Ad. Murim. 37.

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III.

Disasters
of Bruce.

Mar. 29.

Bruce, by the murder of Comyn, had staked his life: he could save it only by winning a sceptre. He assumed the title of king, summoned the Scots to his standard, and was crowned without any opposition at Scone. When his wife, the daughter of the earl of Ulster, was informed of the coronation, she ventured to express a hope that he, who was a king in summer, might not prove an exile in winter. These words were noticed as a prediction: but it required not the spirit of prophecy, to foretel the disasters, which attended the first efforts of the new monarch. In the wood of Methuen, and the neighbourhood of Perth, six of his bravest knights were made prisoners by Pembroke: and Bruce himself, thrown from his horse, must have shared their lot, had he not been rescued by Seaton. The Grampian hills offered a retreat to the fugitives: the deer of the forest, and fish of the stream, supplied them with food: occasionally they descended to the lowlands, and as often returned at the approach of the English: and during two months wandered like outlaws through Breadalbane and Athol. But their sufferings were lessened by the attentions of their female relatives, who, under the guidance of Nigel, a brother of Bruce, had arrived to share the lot of their fathers, brothers, and husbands. Near the banks of Loch Tay, they were discovered by Alexander lord of Lorn, who had married a Comyn. He summoned his clan: Bruce and

June 19.

Aug. 11.

his followers were defeated : and it became necessary to separate for their safety. The ladies were conducted on horseback to the castle of Kildrummy : the king, with only two or three companions, proceeded on foot to Loch-Lomond : crossed it in a boat ; and received an hospitable welcome at the castle of Dunavarty, from the lord of Kintyre. After three days' rest, he embarked in a small ship, steered to the north of Ireland, and in the unfrequented island of Rathrin, buried himself during the winter from the knowledge and pursuit of his enemies.¹⁴⁹

Edward, through weakness, was unable to leave the neighbourhood of Carlisle : but he could attend the deliberations of his council, and issue instructions for the punishment of the prisoners. It was determined that the murderers of Comyn, their abettors and concealers, should be drawn and hanged : that all rebels taken with arms in their hands should be hanged or beheaded : that of those who surrendered, the most dangerous should be imprisoned during the king's pleasure ; the rest, with such as had joined the insurgents by compulsion, and the common people, should be punished according to the discretion of the king's lieutenant. In consequence of these orders, a few prisoners were tried, condemned,

Punishment of
the prisoners.

¹⁴⁹ Barbour, 29—61. Ford. xii. 2. West. 455. The adventures of Bruce are romantic and interesting in Barbour. Fordun bears testimony to his accuracy : but Barbour was a poet, and evidently avails himself of the privilege of his profession.

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and executed, among whom the most distinguished were the earl of Athol, Nigel the brother of Bruce, Christopher Seaton, with his brother Alexander, both Englishmen, Simon Fraser, and Herbert de Norham. If we consider these unfortunate men as the champions of freedom, they may demand our pity; but their execution cannot substantiate the charge of cruelty against Edward. Some were murderers: all had repeatedly broken their oaths of fealty, and had been repeatedly admitted to pardon.¹⁵⁰

Among the prisoners were three ecclesiastics, the abbot of Scone, and the bishops of St. Andrew's and Glasgow, and most of the females, who had so heroically joined the outlaws in the highlands. The former had been taken in complete armour, and were confined in separate castles in England. The latter fell into the hands of the king, by the surrender of Kildrummy, or the violation of the sanctuary at Tain in Ross-shire. To the wife of Bruce Edward assigned his manor of Brustwick for her residence, with an establishment suitable to her rank as countess of Carrick.¹⁵¹ Many were dis-

¹⁵⁰ Ryley, 510. Trivet, 344, 345. West. 455, 456.

¹⁵¹ The king's directions are curious. Her establishment was to consist of—1. Two females of the country, of a good age, very sedate, and of approved conduct, one as a companion, the other as a waiting maid. 2. Two valets of good age and sedate, one belonging to her father the earl of Ulster, the other of the country to carve for her. 3. A footman “to stay in her chamber, a sober man and not “riotous, to make her bed, and do other things fitting for the cham-

persed in different convents, and placed under the custody of the nuns. Two, the countess of Buchan, who in right of her family had placed the crown on the head of Bruce, and his sister Mary, who by her conduct must have merited the distinction, were treated with greater severity. They were sent to the two fortresses of Berwick and Roxburgh, where each was shut up in a strong cage of latticed work. Four years passed before the latter, seven before the former, was released from her confinement.¹⁵²

About the end of winter the exiles issued from their retreat. Thomas and Alexander Bruce landed with a body of Irish at Lochrain; were opposed by Duncan Macdowal, made prisoners, and executed at Carlisle. The king was more fortunate than his brothers. He sailed to the coast of Carrick, surprised the English in the vicinity of Turnberry, and hastened for security to the hills and forests. By degrees he was

Feb. 9.

May 10.

“ber.” 4. A house steward to take care of her keys, pantry, and butlery. Also a cook.—She was moreover to have three greyhounds to hunt in the warren and park, when she wished; as much venison and fish as she wanted; the house she liked best, and liberty to ride to any part of the manor. Rym. ii. 1013, 1014.

¹⁵² Some of our writers say they were exposed in these cages to the gaze of the people. The contrary is evident from the king's orders. The cage was to be built within one of the turrets of the castle: and no one was to come near it but the woman servant. In each cage was to be the “convenience of a decent chamber.” Rym. ii. 1014. I suspect that a large room was divided by a strong partition of lattice work, and that one of these divisions was called a cage, and allotted for the use of the prisoner.

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joined by his former vassals, defeated Pembroke, and drove Ralph de Monthermer to the castle of Ayr. He even laid siege to the place, but had the wisdom, at the approach of the English forces, to retire once more to the mountains.¹⁵³

To Edward the success of his antagonist, trifling as it was, became a continued source of vexation. In July he felt a marked improvement in his health, and ordered the army to advance into Scotland. But the very exertion of mounting on horseback threw him back into his former state of weakness: his progress in four days was confined to six miles: and the next evening he expired at Burgh on the sands, in the sixty-ninth year of his age, and the thirty-fifth of his reign.¹⁵⁴

Edward was twice married. His first wife was Eleanor of Castile, daughter of Ferdinand III., and, after the death of her mother, heiress of Ponthieu. Eleanor deserved and possessed the affections of her husband. She is described as elegant in her person, and gentle in her manners; pious, prudent, and charitable; abstaining from all interference in matters of state; and employing her authority to relieve the oppressed, and reconcile those who were at variance. She bore Edward four sons, and eleven daughters, of whom several died in their in-

¹⁵³ Barheuc, 92—157. West. 457, 458. Hem. 225.

¹⁵⁴ Rym. ii. 1059.

fancy, and not more than three are known to have survived their father. Her death happened near Lincoln in 1290. The king suspended his expedition to Scotland, that he might follow the funeral to Westminster; and wherever the corpse rested for the night, ordered a magnificent cross to be erected to her memory.¹⁵⁵ His second wife was Margaret of France, by whom he had a daughter who died in her infancy, and two sons who survived him.

¹⁵⁵ Some of these crosses still remain, and are of considerable elegance. His object in these erections was not merely to preserve her memory, but to induce passengers to stop and offer up their prayers for her soul. Wals. 54. In the circular letter which he sent on the occasion to different prelates and abbots, he describes the object of these prayers to be, *ut si quid macule non purgate in ipsa, forsan oblivionis defectu vel alio modo, remansit, per utilia orationum suffragia, juxta divinæ misericordiæ plenitudinem abstergatur.* Rym. ii. 498.

CHAP. IV.

EDWARD II.

CONTEMPORARY PRINCES.

<i>Emperors of Ger.</i>	<i>King of Scotland.</i>	<i>Kings of France.</i>	<i>Kings of Spain.</i>	<i>Popes.</i>
Albert 1308	Robert I.	Philip IV... 1314	Ferdinand IV.	Clement V. 1314
Henry VII 1313		Louis X.... 1316 1312	John XXII.
Louis IV.		Philip V. . . 1322	Alphonso XI.	
		Charles IV.		

CORONATION OF EDWARD—ELEVATION, EXILE, AND DEATH OF
GAVESTON—WAR IN SCOTLAND—THE DEFEAT AT BANNOCK-
BURN—EDWARD BRUCE DEFEATED AND SLAIN IN IRELAND
—TRUCE WITH SCOTLAND—WAR WITH THE BARONS—LOSS
OF GUIENNE—THE QUEEN MAKES WAR ON THE KING—
EDWARD IS DEPOSED—AND MURDERED.

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Accession
of Ed-
ward II.

OF the six sons of the late king three had preceded him to the grave. The eldest of the survivors, three-and-twenty years of age, bore the name, but inherited little of the character, of his father. From his childhood he had lived in habits of intimacy with Piers de Gaveston, the son of a gentleman of Guienne, whom Edward had selected for his companion. The two boys grew up together: they partook of the same amusements, and applied to the same exercises: and a similar taste for dissipation and pleasure, cemented, as they advanced in age, the attach-

ment of their more early years. The king had occasion frequently to reprehend, sometimes to punish, the excesses of the heir-apparent : and about three months before his death, he banished Gaveston from the kingdom, and exacted from his son a promise upon oath, that he would never recall his favourite without the royal consent.¹ Affairs required the presence of the young prince in London : but before he departed from Carlisle, Edward sent for him to his bedside : and after giving him such advice as dying kings have often given to their intended successors, told him that of the money in the treasury he had bequeathed thirty-two thousand marks for the service of seven score knights in Palestine : forbade him, under pain of his paternal malediction, to allow Gaveston to return to England without the previous consent of his parliament ; and commanded him to prosecute the Scottish war, and to carry his dead bones along with the army to the very extremity of Scotland.² Soon afterwards the king died : and

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1307.
May 29.

¹ Rym. ii. 1043. ² This command is thus mentioned by Froissart. "He called his eldest son, and made him swear in the presence of all his barons, by the saints, that as soon as he should be dead, he would have his body boiled in a large caldron until the flesh should be separated from the bones ; that he would have the flesh buried, and the bones preserved, and that every time the Scots should rebel against him, he would summon his people, and carry against them the bones of his father : for he believed most firmly that, as long as his bones should be carried against the Scots, those Scots would never be victorious." Froissart, i. xxv. Johnes' translation.

CHAP. his commands no less than his advice were for-
 IV. gotten. His successor hastened from the capital

July 29. to the borders ; received at Carlisle the homage
 of the English, at Dumfries that of the Scottish

Aug. 6. barons ; and at the head of a gallant army ad-
 vanced in pursuit of Robert Bruce. But war
 had few attractions for the young Edward. He

Aug. 21. halted at Cumnock in Ayrshire ; and, under pre-
 tence of making preparations for his marriage
 and coronation, hastily returned into England.

Recall of
 Gaveston.

The first object of the new king had been the
 recall of his favourite, on whom, during his
 absence, he had conferred the title of earl of
 Cornwall, with a grant of the lands which had
 formerly belonged to Richard king of the Ro-
 mans. Gaveston joined him before he left Scot-
 land : and his arrival was followed by a total
 change in the offices of government. The chan-
 cellor, the barons of the exchequer, the justices
 of the different courts were removed : and the
 treasurer, Langton bishop of Lichfield, who, by
 refusing to supply money for their pleasures,
 had formerly incurred the enmity of the prince
 and his favourite, was stripped of his property,
 and thrown into prison. In defiance of his fa-
 ther's prohibition Edward ventured to bury his
 bones at Westminster, and gave the money
 destined for the holy war to Gaveston, who was
 daily loaded with new honours. He was made
 lord chamberlain, married Margaret the king's
 niece, obtained a valuable grant of lands in

Sep. 20.

Oct. 27.

Nov. 1.

Dec. 6.

Guienne, and, when Edward prepared to sail to France, was appointed regent of the kingdom, with all those powers, which the sovereign on such occasions was accustomed to reserve to himself.³

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IV.
Dec. 25.

Edward landed at Boulogne, where he found Philip le bel, king of France. He did homage for Guienne and Ponthieu, and the next day in the presence of four kings and three queens married Isabella, the daughter of the French monarch, who was reputed the most beautiful woman in Europe. A few days were given to feasting and rejoicings: and on his return Edward was accompanied or followed by the two uncles of his bride, and a numerous train of foreign noblemen, whom he had invited to be witnesses of his coronation. On their way they were met by the regent, and the English barons; when to the general astonishment, the king, neglecting the others, rushed into the arms of his favourite, kissed him, and called him his brother. The coronation was performed with extraordinary magnificence:⁴ but outward

King's
marriage.
1308.
Jan. 24.

Jan. 25.

Feb. 7.

And coro-
nation.

Feb. 24.

³ Rym. iii. 1—4. 11. 49. 53. Heming. 244. Walsing. 95. Lel. Coll. i. 248. By several writers the marriage of Gaveston is placed some years later. But the contrary is plain, from the king's grant to Gaveston and Margaret his wife. Rym. iii. 87.

⁴ The following is the oath taken on the occasion. "Sir, will you grant, and keep, and confirm by your oath, to the people of England, the laws and customs granted to them by the ancient kings of England, your predecessors, righteous and devout to God: and, namely, the laws, customs, and franchises, granted

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IV.

Feb. 23.

Exile of
the fa-
vourite.

expressions of joy accorded ill with the discontent, which secretly rankled in the breasts of the more powerful nobles. Not only had the offices at this ceremony been distributed without regard to the claims of inheritance, or the precedents of former reigns; but, what was a general grievance, the place of honour, to carry the crown and walk in the procession immediately before the king, had been allotted to Gaveston. This preference awakened every former prejudice against him. Three days later the barons assembled in the refectory of the monks at Westminster, and sent to Edward a petition for the immediate banishment of the favourite. He promised to return an answer in the parliament to be held after Easter: and in the mean time endeavoured, but in vain, to mollify their resentment. Gaveston was still the sole dispenser of the royal favours: in the splendour of his dress and the number of his

“to the clergy and people by the glorious king, St. Edward, your predecessor?” “I grant them, and promise to keep them.”

“Sir, will you keep to God, and holy church, and clergy and people, peace and harmony in God, according to your power?” “I will keep them.”

“Sir, will you cause to be observed in all your judgments, equal and right justice and discretion, in mercy and truth, according to your power.” “I will cause it to be observed.” “Sir, do you grant that the laws and right customs, which the commonalty of your realm shall have chosen, shall be kept and observed: and will you defend and strengthen them to the honour of God, according to your power?” “I grant it and promise.” Rym. iii. 63.

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retinue he outshone every rival: in different tournaments he had by his good fortune or address unhorsed the earls of Lancaster, Hereford, Pembroke, and Warenne; and, elated with his own superiority, he continued to despise and ridicule his opponents. These, however, were fixed in their resolution. Their vanity had been too severely mortified, to acquiesce in the triumphs and taunts of a man, whom they considered as a foreigner and an upstart. At the parliament their demand was renewed in terms which admitted of neither refusal nor procrastination: letters patent were accordingly issued: and Gaveston himself was compelled to swear that he would never return: and the bishops pronounced against him the sentence of excommunication, if he should violate his oath. Edward, to console the affliction of his favourite, made him new grants of land, and accompanied him as far as Bristol. There he sailed from England: but his enemies had scarcely time to felicitate themselves on his downfall, when to their surprise and indignation they learned that he had assumed by royal appointment the government of Ireland.⁵

Apr. 28.

May 18.

June 7.

June 26.

In Ireland Gaveston displayed the magnificence of a prince, and distinguished himself in several successful engagements with the na-

Petition of
the commons.

⁵ Rym. iii. 63. 80. 87—93. Trokel. 5, 6. Mon. Malm. 99, 110. Moor, 593. Wal. 96.

CHAP
IV.1309.
April.

tives.⁶ In England the king assembled his parliament, and solicited an aid. In the last year he had obtained a twentieth from the lords and knights, a fifteenth from the citizens and burghesses: the repetition of the request in the present, emboldened the commons to append to their vote of a twenty-fifth the unprecedented demand, that their petition for the redress of their grievances should be previously granted. This petition deserves the notice of the reader: because it enumerates those abuses, which for more than a century continued under different modifications to harass and irritate the people. They complained, 1. That the king's purveyors took all kinds of provisions without giving any security for the payment: 2. That he had imposed additional duties on wine, on cloth, and on other foreign imports, which had raised the price one third to the consumer: 3. That by the debasement of the coin the value of all commodities had been advanced: 4. That the stewards and mareschals of the king's household held pleas, which did not fall under their cognizance: 5. And exercised their authority beyond the verge, that is, a circuit of twelve leagues round the king's person: 6. That no clerks were appointed, as they had been under the last monarch, to receive the petitions of the commons in parliament: 7. That the officers appointed

⁶ Ann, Hib. apud Cam. ann. 1303, 1309.

to take articles for the king's use in fairs and markets, took more than they ought, and made a profit of the surplus: 8. That in civil suits men were prevented from obtaining their right by writs under the privy seal: 9. That felons eluded the punishment of their crimes by the ease with which charters of pardon were obtained: 10. That the constables of the castles held common pleas at their gates without any authority: and, 11. That the escheaters ousted men of their inheritances, though they had appealed to the king's courts. Edward was startled by this remonstrance. He prorogued the parliament for three months, that he might have time to consider it: and then granted every article, with the exception of that which regarded the new duty on imports. He withdrew the duty for the moment: but ordered it to be levied again the next year.⁷

But the king was now occupied with a more important concern than the welfare of his subjects. He was labouring to procure the return of Gaveston, without whose company he appeared to consider life as a burden. By condescension and liberality he broke the union of the barons, and attached some of the more powerful to his own party. He had previously solicited the advice and aid of his father-in-law; and had written to the pope in favour of Gave-

Gaveston
returns.

⁷ Rot. Parl. i. 441.

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IV.

ston. From the king of France he obtained nothing : the pontiff repeatedly exhorted him to live in harmony with his people ; and at last absolved Gaveston from his oath, on condition that he should submit to the judgment of the church, and make answer to the charges brought by his enemies. Edward was dissatisfied with this conditional absolution : but his impatience could be no longer controlled : he ordered the favourite to return ; flew to Chester to receive him, and conveyed him in triumph to Langley in Hertfordshire. When the parliament assembled at Stamford, the barons, soothed by the promises of the king, and the apparent humility of Gaveston, consented that he should remain in England.

And con-
ceals him-
self.

But neither Edward nor his minion were capable of improving from experience. The reign of dissipation instantly recommenced : the court became a perpetual scene of feasting, dancing, and merriment ; and Gaveston, in the possession of his former ascendancy, indulged in his former extravagance, and irritated his enemies by his pleasantries and sarcasms.⁸ It was, however, impossible for him to be ignorant of the general

⁸ He gave nicknames to the principal nobility. Thus "the gentil count Thomas of Lancaster" was sometimes "the old hog," at others "the stage player;" the earl of Pembroke, "Joseph the Jew;" the earl of Gloucester, "the cuckold's bird;" and the earl of Warwick, "the black dog of the wood." Packington, *apud* *Lel. Coll.* ii. 461. Wals. 94. 97.

discontent. He repeatedly published his intention of giving a tournament: none of the great lords would accept his invitation. He ordered the necessary arrangements to be made at Kennington: during the night the lists and the scaffolding disappeared. At length the exhausted state of the treasury compelled Edward to convoke a parliament at York: but the principal barons refused to attend, under the pretence that they were not equal to the power, and afraid of the malice of Gaveston. The summons was repeated, and was again disobeyed. Edward's necessities continued to increase: the favourite absconded: and the parliament assembled at Westminster.

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IV.

Oct. 18.

1310.
Feb. 3.

Feb. 28.

To this parliament, in defiance of the royal prohibition, the barons came attended by their retainers in arms. Edward found himself completely in their power, and reluctantly consented to the appointment of a committee of peers, who, under the name of ordainers, should regulate the king's household, and redress the grievances of the nation. The archbishop who had resumed the administration of his diocese,⁹ seven bishops, eight earls, and thirteen barons, having received the royal permission to name the committee, signed an instrument, in which

Barons in
arms.

March 16.

March 20.

⁹ He returned in 1303. During his suspension the pope with the king's permission, had appointed a receiver of the income of the archbishopric. At his return the whole amount was restored to him. Rym. ii. 1020. Ang. Sac. i. 51.

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they declared that this grant proceeded from the king's free will, that it ought not to be drawn into a precedent against the rights of the crown, and that the powers to be exercised by the ordainers would expire of themselves at the feast of St. Michael in the following year. The committee was then appointed, consisting of seven prelates, eight earls, and six barons, who immediately swore to discharge their office "to
" the honour of God, the honour and profit of
" holy church, the honour of their lord the king,
" the profit of him and his people, according to
" right and reason, and the oath which he took
" at his coronation."¹⁰

He rejoins
the king.

The ordainers sate in the capital. Edward was glad to withdraw from their presence, and summoned his military retainers to follow him into Scotland. On his way he was rejoined by Gaveston, whose imprudence was rewarded with new favours. He obtained the royal castle of Nottingham, and was created justiciary of the forests north of the Trent. In Scotland the king penetrated as far as the Forth without finding an enemy. He passed the winter at Berwick, and in the spring ordered Gaveston at the head of the army to resume the war. The favourite penetrated beyond the Forth, displayed his usual prowess in action, and deserved the praise of a prudent and enterprising general. But the cau-

Oct. 1.

¹⁰ Rym. iii. 200, 203, 204, 220. Ryley, 526. Rot. Parl. i. 445.

tion of Bruce, allowed him no opportunity of gaining those laurels which it was hoped would attract the admiration of the people, and silence the tongues of his enemies. The time approached, when it was necessary for Edward to meet his parliament. Gaveston shut himself up in the strong castle of Bamborough in Northumberland:¹¹ the king proceeded to London to receive the articles of reform which had at last been framed by the wisdom or the prejudices of the ordainers.

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IV.

1311.
Aug. 8.

On an attentive perusal of these articles the reader will be of opinion that many of them were highly beneficial: but he will find some that trenched on the lawful prerogative of the crown, and will suspect that others were framed for the gratification of private revenge. The first six, regarding the rights of the church, the king's peace, the payment of his debts, the farming of the customs, and the observance of the great charter, had been already published with some modifications by the king, before he proceeded to Scotland.¹² The principal of the others were the following: that all grants, which had been made by Edward since he issued the commission, and of course those in favour of

The articles of reform.

¹¹ Rym. 226, 314. Moor, 593. Heming, 243. Bamborough belonged to the lady Vesey.

¹² At Northampton, Aug. 2. See Rot. Parl. i. 446. The customs had of late been farmed by the company of the Frescobaldi of Florence.

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Gaveston, should be revoked: and that all which may be made hereafter without the consent of the baronage assembled in parliament, and until the king's debts are paid, should be invalid, and should subject the receiver to such punishment as the baronage might award.—That the king should not leave the kingdom, or levy war without the consent of the baronage; and in the case of his absence a guardian should be chosen by the common assent of the baronage in parliament.—That all purveyances, except such as were ancient and lawful, should cease, and that those who should presume to take any other, might be pursued with hue and cry, and punished on conviction like robbers.—That the new taxes on wool, cloth, wine, and other merchandise should be abolished.—That all the great officers of the crown, the wardens of the cinque ports, and the governors of the king's foreign possessions, should be chosen with the advice and assent of the baronage in parliament.—That the sheriffs should be persons of property sufficient to answer for their conduct; should be chosen by the chancellor, treasurer, and the rest of the council; and, in the absence of the chancellor, by the treasurer, barons of the exchequer, and justices of the king's bench, and should receive their commissions under the great seal.—That Gaveston, for having given bad advice to the king, embezzled the public money, formed an association of men sworn to live and

die with him against all others, estranged the affections of the sovereign from his liege subjects, and obtained blank charters with the royal seal fixed to them, should be banished for ever from England and all countries appertaining to the crown, should depart before the first day of November, and if he were found within the king's dominions after that day, should be treated as an enemy to the nation.—That the lord Henry Beaumont, for having received grants from the king since the issuing of the commission, should never more come near the king, unless it were to perform his duty in parliament or in war, and should forfeit his income till he had repaid whatever he might have hitherto received from the aforesaid grants: that his sister the lady Vesey, who had procured these grants, should never more come within the limits of the court, and should restore to the king her castle of Bamborough, which in reality belonged to the crown.—And that, to prevent delay in the administration of justice, parliaments should be holden at least once, and if need should be, oftener than once every year.¹³ To these a few other, but less

¹³ On account of the importance, which has sometimes been attached to this ordinance, I will translate it entirely. “Whereas “many persons are delayed of their demands in the king's court, “because the opposite party alleges that answer ought not to be “made to the demandants out of the king's presence; and whereas “many persons are grieved against right by the officers of the “king, of which grievances they cannot obtain redress without a

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1311.
Oct. 5.

important articles were added, regarding appeals, outlawries, and the authority of the marshals and stewards of the king's court. The reader may easily imagine the distress of Edward, when the whole collection was submitted for his approbation. Anxious to retain to its full extent the authority which he had inherited from his father, and still more anxious to preserve his favourite from the sentence of banishment, he objected, complained, and entreated: but the barons were positive and inexorable: and the king after a long struggle consented to sign and publish the ordinances. Previously, however, he solemnly protested, that if any one of the articles should prove injurious to the just rights of the crown, or be found to have been unauthorized by the powers given to the commissioners, it should be considered as void: and therefore reserved to himself the right of amending every such article with the advice of the lords ordainers and of his own council.¹⁴ This protes-

"common parliament, we ordain that the king hold a parliament
"once a year, or twice if need be, and in a convenient place; and
"that in such parliament, the pleas that have been delayed as
"aforesaid, and the pleas in which the judges are of different
"opinions, shall be recorded and determined: and that in the
"same manner shall be determined the petitions that have been pre-
"sented in parliament, as law and reason shall demand." No. 29.

¹⁴ Rot. Parl. i. 281. 447. Ryley, 530. 541. Rym. iii. 337. The king's protestation is not on the roll, but its existence is asserted in writs which he afterwards published. I may add that, from the tenor of the ordinances, it is plain that the authority of the parliament was hitherto supposed to reside in the baronage, the great

tation sufficiently proved the king's resolution to burst the shackles imposed upon him, as soon as he could do it with impunity.

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IV.

Gaveston lingered in the company of Edward till the day fixed for his departure. They separated in tears. The exile landed in France, passed into Flanders, and presented to the duke and dutchess of Brabant the royal letters, recommending him to their protection. As for the king, he first prorogued, afterwards dissolved the parliament: and then, carefully concealing his intention, retired slowly into the north, where he found himself less under the control of the barons. These congratulated themselves that at length they had separated him and his favourite for ever: but before Christmas they learned, that Edward and Gaveston had joined each other at York. A royal proclamation was published, stating that the favourite had returned in obedience to the king's orders; that he was a true and loyal subject; and was ready to maintain his innocence against the charges of his accusers. A new grant was made to him of his former estates and honours.¹⁵

Gaveston
departs.
Nov. 1.

And re-
turns.

1312.
Jan. 18.

Feb. 24.

Among the English nobility, the most powerful was Thomas, the grandson of Henry III., who united in his possession the five earldoms of Lancaster, Lincoln, Leicester, Salisbury, and

He is
taken pri-
soner.

council of former reigns. The commons had nothing to do but to present petitions, and to grant money.

¹⁵ Rym. iii. 287. 293, 299. 304. 308. Trokel. 9. Wals. 93.

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- Derby. The confederate barons appointed him their leader, and under the pretence of a tournament, secretly assembled the knights of their party. Edward seems not to have been aware of their design. Instead of seeking to oppose force to force, he contented himself with issuing commissions, in virtue of his late protest, for the revision of the ordinances.¹⁶ He was awakened to a sense of his danger by the sudden approach of the earl of Lancaster, who, not finding the king in York, hastened his march towards Newcastle. Edward had time to evacuate the place a few hours before the arrival of the barons. He fled to Tynmouth, disregarded the tears and entreaties of his wife, embarked with Gaveston on board a vessel, and landed in safety at Scarborough. The favourite for greater security, remained in the castle; the king repaired to York, and unfurled the royal banner. Lancaster did not visit the queen at Tynmouth, lest it might exasperate the king against his consort: but having sent her a letter of compliment and condolence, retraced his steps, encamped between York and Scarborough, and commissioned the earls of Surrey and Pembroke to lay siege to the castle. It was in vain that Edward sent them a mandate to retire. The unfortunate Gaveston finding the place untenable, surrendered with the king's
- March 8.
- May 5.
- May. 17.

¹⁶ Ryley, Plac. 530. Rot. Parl. i. 417.

consent to the earl of Pembroke, on condition, that if no accommodation were effected before the first of August, he should be reinstated in the possession of Scarborough. It had been agreed that the prisoner should be confined in his own castle of Wallingford: and the earl and the lord Henry Percy bound themselves for his safety to the king, under the forfeiture of their lands, limbs, and lives. From Scarborough he proceeded under their protection towards Wallingford: at Dedington, Pembroke left him in the custody of his servants, and departed to spend the night with his countess in the neighbourhood. Gaveston retired to rest without any suspicion of danger: but “the black dog” had sworn that the favourite should feel his “teeth:” and before dawn he received a peremptory order to dress himself, and leave his chamber. At the gate, instead of his former guards, he found to his astonishment, his enemy, the earl of Warwick, with a numerous force. He was immediately placed on a mule, and his arrival at the castle of Warwick was announced by martial music, and shouts of triumph. There the chiefs of the party sate in council over the fate of their prisoner. To a proposal to save his life, a voice replied, “You have caught the fox: “if you let him go, you will have to hunt him “again:” and it was ultimately resolved to disregard the capitulation, and to put him to death, in conformity with one of the ordinances. When

And be-
headed.

CHAP.
IV.

June 19.

his doom was announced, Gaveston threw himself at the feet of the earl of Lancaster: and implored, but in vain, the pity and protection of his "gentle lord." He was hurried to Blacklow-hill (now Gaversike) and beheaded in the presence of the earls of Lancaster, Hereford, and Surrey. The intelligence of his murder was received throughout the nation with astonishment and dismay. The annals of the kingdom furnished no similar execution since the conquest. By the perpetrators themselves it was deemed a hazardous experiment; and on that account the victim had been conveyed to a spot within the jurisdiction of the earl of Lancaster, whose greater power and relationship to the king appeared to screen him from danger. But they were disappointed. The blood of Gaveston was afterwards avenged with the blood of his persecutor.¹⁷

King and
barons re-
conciled.

The first news of this event threw the king into the most violent transports of grief, which gradually subsided into a fixed purpose of revenge. He had gone from York to Berwick: but immediately returned towards the capital, and was joined on his way by the earl of Pembroke. The conduct of that nobleman was

¹⁷ Rym. iii. 327, 328, 334. Mon. Malm. 121—124. Trokel. 13—17. Wals. 100, 101. Gaveston's body was buried by the friars in their church in Oxford: it was afterwards removed by the king, and interred in the new church at Langley, Knyght. 2533. Let. Coll. i. 248.

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open to much suspicion. It was generally believed, that, as he had granted the capitulation to Gaveston, without consulting the confederates, so, in order to satisfy them without exposing his own honour, he had purposely allowed his castle of Dedington to be forced by the earl of Warwick. He succeeded, however, in convincing the king of his innocence: and proved his assertion, by his subsequent attachment to the royal interests. Edward, on his arrival in London, summoned a parliament, solicited succours from France, and assembled a considerable body of forces. But the advance of the barons to Dunstaple, and the resolute tone in which they made their demands, induced him to listen to the pacific exhortations of the legates of the pope, and the envoys of the king of France: and the birth of a son and heir, which fortunately happened at the same time, seemed almost to obliterate from his mind the untimely fate of his favourite. Conferences were held between the deputies of the king and of the barons, in the presence of the foreign ministers: and a form of reconciliation was unanimously adopted, subject to the approbation of the earl of Lancaster and his chief associates, who were absent.¹⁸ One article was soon fulfilled, the surrender to the king of the plate and jewels, which had belonged

Nov. 13.

Nov. 11.

Dec. 20.

1313.
Feb. 7.

¹⁸ Soon afterwards, on the 11th of May, died archbishop Winchelsey, the great adviser of the barons in this, as he had been in the last reign. *Ipsius Roberti hortatu. Higden apud Brady, iii. 119.*

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IV.

to Gaveston.¹⁹ But the associated barons, for their own security, demanded that he should be declared a traitor: a demand which Edward spurned with indignation. Two parliaments were summoned to ratify the treaty: from each the principal agents in the murder were detained by their apprehensions. At length every difficulty was surmounted. The king seated himself on his throne in Westminster hall: the barons on their knees expressed their sorrow for having given him offence: a general amnesty was proclaimed: and the next day more than five hundred particular pardons were issued to the noblemen and knights who had been concerned in the confederacy.²⁰

War with
Scotland.

It is now time to return to the affairs of Scotland. While Edward had been contending for a favourite, he had contrived to lose a crown. The ease with which the late king had repeatedly overrun Scotland, had encouraged a persuasion that the natives could never withstand the superior power of England: and the slow but constant progress of Bruce was viewed with indifference or contempt. Once, indeed, Edward, and afterwards Gaveston by his orders, had crossed

¹⁹ We may judge of the wealth of Gaveston from his plate and jewels, the inventory of which fills five pages in Rymer, iii. 383—393.

²⁰ Rym. iii. 404. 428. 442—449. Mon. Malm. 125—134. Wals. 102, 103. At the same time an act of indemnity was also passed in favour of those who had been the adherents of Gaveston. Stat. 7 Ed. II, St. 1.

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IV.

the frontiers : but the Scottish king had cautiously retired before them ; and both returned to England almost without seeing an enemy. In the mean time the fortresses, which commanded the country, fell in succession into the hands of the natives. The castle of Linlithgow was won by the artifice of a peasant named William Binnock. He concealed in a load of hay a few armed men, who, when the waggon entered the gate, mastered the guard, and kept possession till they were joined by their countrymen.²¹ Perth was surprised at night by Bruce himself. He waded through the ditch with a ladder on his shoulders, and was the second man who mounted the wall.²² Roxburgh was taken by escalade, while the garrison indulged in the excesses of the carnival.²³ The castle of Edinburgh was the last which yielded. At midnight Randolph earl of Moray, with thirty companions, climbed up the rock ; the alarm was given : the governor, who hastened to the spot, fell in the onset ; and his men surrendered to the assailants.²⁴ Alarmed by these losses, the Scots who still adhered to the English solicited assistance, and the inhabitants of the three northern counties complained that they were abandoned by the king to the predatory incursions of their neighbours. At length the news arrived, that Mowbray governor of Stirling

1311.

1312.
Jan. 8.1313.
Feb. 28.

March 14.

1314.

²¹ Barb. 199.²² Ford. xii. 13. Barb. 130.²³ Barb. 205. Ford. xii. 19.²⁴ Ford. xii. 19. Barb. 211. Lel. Coll. ii. 546.

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IV.

had consented to surrender that important fortress, if it were not relieved before the feast of St. John the Baptist. Edward, apparently at peace with his own subjects, judged the opportunity favourable for an expedition into Scotland. He summoned his military tenants to meet him at Berwick, ordered levies of foot soldiers in Wales and the northern counties of England, and demanded aid from the chiefs of the Irish septs. But all his projects were thwarted by civil dissension. In a parliament, which lasted seven weeks, the ordinances were defended by the barons, and opposed by the king: the clergy of both provinces refused an aid: and the earls of Lancaster, Surrey, Warwick, and Arundel, and probably many others influenced by their example, disobeyed the summons. A week before the day fixed for the surrender of Stirling, Edward marched from Berwick, and though the army was encumbered by a long train of provision waggons and military engines, reached the neighbourhood on the eve of the festival.²⁵ Bruce

June 18.

²⁵ It is impossible to ascertain the number of Edward's army. By Fordun it is ridiculously multiplied to 340,000 horse, and an equal number of foot. But the verses which he cites as his authority may have a different meaning. Ford. xii. 21. As the most powerful earls did not attend (Wals. 104), and as some others were excused by the royal writs (Rym. iii. 476), it is probable that the cavalry was not as numerous as usual. The Irish do not appear to have arrived. The infantry summoned by writs to the sheriffs amounted to 21,540 men. Rym. iii. 481. Lord Hailes, in opposition to Hume, observes that these footmen were furnished by twelve counties and a few lords; and that if all the counties and barons in

had employed the time to make preparations for the combat. His army, consisting of thirty thousand picked men, stretched from the burn of Bannock on the right, to the neighbourhood of the castle on the left:²⁶ and was protected in front by narrow pits dug in the ground, and concealed by hurdles covered with sods, sufficiently strong to bear a man on foot, and sufficiently weak to sink under the weight of an armed knight on horseback. Douglas and the Stewart commanded the centre: Edward Bruce took charge of the right, and Randolph of the left wing. The men of Argyle, of Carrick, and of the isles, composed a body of reserve: and at a distance in a valley lay fifteen thousand followers of the army, whom the king dared not bring into the field, but whom he instructed to shew themselves in the heat of the conflict as a new army hastening to the aid of their countrymen.²⁷

England furnished their quotas in equal proportion, the army must have amounted to an immense number (Annals, ii. 41). But there is no evidence that they did so. The counties in question furnished 14,500 men, because they lay nearest to the enemy: the remaining 7040 were required from Wales, and the marches of Wales, because the king wanted men accustomed to fight in forests and on mountains, and "able to drive the enemy a locis fortibus et morosis, ubi equitibus difficilis patebit accessus." Rym. iii. 481.

²⁶ Most writers describe the Scots as lying with their front to the south, and Stirling behind them. I have followed lord Hailes, who decided from his own inspection of the ground (ii. 42). It should, however, be observed, that Moor gives the very same position to the English. They fought with the morning sun in their eyes: had they waited till noon, it would have been on their right. Moor, 591.

²⁷ Ford. cura Goodall, p. 256. not.

CHAP.

IV.

June 23.

June 24.

On the eve of the battle a warm action occurred between the advanced parties of the two armies, and terminated in favour of the Scots. Bruce with his battle-axe clove the scull of Henry de Bohun, a distinguished knight: and his followers hailed the prowess of their sovereign as an omen of victory. At daybreak they gathered round an eminence, on which Maurice abbot of Inchaffray celebrated mass, and harangued his hearers on the duty of fighting for the liberty of their country. At the close of his discourse they answered with a loud shout: and the abbot, barefoot, with a crucifix in his hand, marched before them to the field of battle. As soon as they were formed, he again addressed them, and, as he prayed, they all fell on their knees. "They kneel," exclaimed some of the English; "they beg for mercy."—"Do not deceive yourselves," replied Ingelram de Umfraville, "they beg for mercy: but it is only from God."²⁸

Battle of
Bannock-
burn.

From the discordant accounts of the Scottish and English writers it is difficult to collect the particulars of the battle. The Scots, with very few exceptions, fought on foot, armed with battle-axes and spears. The king appeared in their front, and bore the same weapons as his subjects. The attack was made by the infantry and archers of the English army: and so fierce was the shock,

²⁸ Ford, xii. 21.

so obstinate the resistance, that the result long remained doubtful. Bruce was compelled to call his reserve into the line: and as a last resource to order a small body of men at arms to attack the archers in flank. This movement decided the fate of the English infantry. They fled in confusion: and the knights with the earl of Gloucester at their head rushed forward to renew the conflict. But their horses were entangled in the pits:²⁹ the riders were thrown: and the timely appearance of the Scots who had been stationed in the valley, scattered dismay through the ranks of the English.³⁰ Edward, who was not deficient in personal bravery, spurred on his charger to partake in the battle: but the earl of Pembroke wisely interposed, and led him to a distance. Giles d'Argentyr, a renowned knight, had hitherto been charged with the defence of the royal person: now, seeing the king out of danger, he bade him farewell, and turning his horse, rode back to the enemy. He cried "An Argentyr," rushed into the hottest part of the fight, and soon met with that death which he sought.³¹

It was in the full confidence of victory that Edward had hastened to Bannock-burn: he fled

²⁹ Though Barbour is silent, the fact of many being destroyed in the pits is mentioned by Fordun, xii. 20. and Moor, 594.

³⁰ Quibus ab Anglicis visis, putabant eos fuisse exercitum, . . . qui Anglos ita stupidos, et herentes reddidit, &c. Ford. p. 256.

³¹ Walsing. 105, Moor, 594, Lel. ii. 547. Mon. Malm. 149, 150.

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IV.

from it with a party of Scottish cavalry at his heels, nor did he dare to halt, till the earl of March admitted him within the walls of Dunbar, whence he proceeded by sea to England. His privy-seal and treasures, with the military engines, and provisions for the army, fell into the hands of the conquerors.³² The number of those who were slain in battle, was not great: but the fugitives, without a leader or a place of retreat, wandered over the country: and if the lives of the knights and esquires were preserved for the sake of ransom, the less precious blood of the footmen was shed without mercy. Bruce behaved to his prisoners with kindness: and in exchange for the earl of Hereford, obtained the release of his wife, sister, and daughter, and of the bishop of Glasgow and the earl of Marr.³³ He thought it a favourable moment to

³² I shall transcribe the description in Fordun. *Boum armenta, gregesque ovium et porcorum, frumentum et hordeum cum molendinis portatilibus, et vinum in dolis atque cadiferreis . . . cum petrariis et ligonibus, trabiculis et mangonellis, sealis et ingeniis, pavilionibus et canopeis, fundis et bombardis, cæterisque bellicis machinis.* Ford, xii. 21. Other manuscripts add *tribuchetis et arietibus*, p. 249.

³³ Rom. iii. 488. 496. The sister of Bruce now liberated was Christiana, relict of Christopher Seaton. His sister Mary had been released from her cage in the castle of Roxburgh, and exchanged for Walter Comyn, as early as the year 1310. Rym. iii. 204. Even the countess of Buchan, after having kept her cage seven years, had been taken out, and put under the charge of the lord Beaumont, in April, 1313. Rym. iii. 401.—I should mention, that among the prisoners was Baston, a carmelite friar, and a professed poet. Edward had compelled him to attend the battle, that he might celebrate his victory: Bruce compelled him,

propose a treaty between the two nations:³⁴ but when Edward refused him the title of king, the indignant Scot put an end to the negotiation, called his parliament, and proceeded to settle the succession. His only child was an unmarried daughter called Marjory: and to avoid the dangers, which in the present circumstances might attend the reign of a female, it was ordained, with her consent, that if the king died without leaving a son, the crown should go to his brother Edward Bruce, and the heirs male of *his* body, failing whom, it should revert to Marjory and her descendants.³⁵

CHAP.
IV.
Sep. 18.

1315.
April 26.

But the Scots were not content with asserting their own independence: they undertook to free Ireland from the English yoke. That island was now divided between two races of men, of different language, habits and laws, and animated with the most deadly hatred towards each other. The more wild and mountainous districts, and the larger portions of Connaught and Ulster, were occupied by the natives: the English had established themselves along the eastern and southern coasts, and in all the principal cities and towns. By the English we are to understand an aggregate mass of adventurers from different countries, from England, Wales, and Guienne; men, or the descendants of men, of

War in
Ireland.

now that he was a captive, to sing the defeat. His poem, and a most singular poem it is, may be seen in Fordun, xii. 22.

³⁴ Rym. 495.

³⁵ Ford. xii. 24.

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IV.

desperate fortunes at home, who had depended on their swords to carve for themselves new fortunes abroad. They professed fealty to the English crown: but their fealty was a mere sound. Since the expedition of John, they had seen no sovereign among them: and the severity with which *he* had punished their transgressions, had been quickly forgotten. At a distance from the court, and in what was deemed a foreign island, they despised the authority of the sovereign; and within the walls of their castles set at defiance the severity of the law.³⁶ At pleasure they levied war on each other, or on the natives: family feuds were transmitted from father to son: and except in the vicinity of Dublin, the seat of provincial government, the “pale” was divided among a multiplicity of petty tyrants, who knew no other law than their own interests, and united to the advantages of partial civilization the ferocity of savages. Conscious that they were the original aggressors, they looked on the natives as natural enemies. Those within the pale they reduced to a state of the most abject villenage: those without they harassed with military expeditions. But their aggressions were requited by the resentment of

³⁶ Rym. i. 391. ii. 1061, 1062. In the last instance Fitzwarin, the king's steward in Ulster, had distrained the lands of the Mandevilles for the king's dues. In revenge they collected an army, entered the royal demesne, and burnt five townships, three mills and 2000 measures of corn.

the sufferers: and the necessity of self-preservation generated a spirit of the most implacable revenge. All Irishmen were included under the sweeping denomination of enemies and robbers: the murder of a native was not considered a crime punishable by law; and the man who had inflicted the most cruel injury on the neighbouring septs, was the most distinguished among his fellows.³⁷

On the other side, the descendants of the original inhabitants were equally lawless, and equally vindictive. In the annals of Ireland we find them perpetually engaged in dissension and warfare. Sometimes they are fighting among themselves, sometimes against their oppressors. Occasionally we see them purchasing the aid of the English, that they may revenge themselves on their own countrymen; occasionally marching under the banners of an English baron, to invade the domains of his neighbour.³⁸ But whatever cause summoned them to arms, their steps might be traced by the desolation which they had wrought, and their victories were always celebrated with murder and conflagration. In short, the appetite for human blood, the hope and pursuit of vengeance, were equally keen in the native and the stran-

The natives.

³⁷ See Fordun, xii. 23, 29, 30.

³⁸ In the instance mentioned above, two Irish kings aided the Mandevilles, and six the stewards. They ended by turning their arms against each other. Rym. ii. 1062.

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IV.

Are joined
by Edward
Bruce.

ger: and each was actuated by the conviction that the destruction of the other was essential to his own safety.

When Edward before his expedition into Scotland, had ordered his vassals to meet him at Berwick, he had also written to his "beloved," the chiefs of the Irish septs, requesting them to accompany De Bourg the earl of Ulster, who had been commanded to lead an army to his assistance.³⁹ This request was neglected. By the Irish the efforts of the Scots were viewed with a kindred feeling. The patriots were fighting against the same nation, by which *they* had been so cruelly oppressed. They were descended of the same lineage, spoke a dialect of the same tongue, and retained, in many respects, the same national institutions.⁴⁰ When intelligence arrived of the victory at Bannock-burn, it was received with enthusiasm, and the conviction that the English were not invincible, awakened a hope that Ireland might recover her independence. Edward discovered that an active correspondence was carried on between the men of Ulster and the court of Bruce. Alarmed for the safety of his Irish dominions, he dis-

1315.
March 14.

³⁹ Rym. iii. 476. It is plain, from the difference between this letter and the usual summons to vassals, that none of the Irish chieftains had sworn fealty to him. He does not give the title of king to any: but that of dux to twenty-six.

⁴⁰ Omnes reges minoris Scotiæ de nostra majore Scotia sanguinis originem sumpserunt, linguam nostram et conditiones nostras quodammodo retinentes. Irish memorial, apud Ford. xii. 32.

CHAP.
IV.

patched the escheator, the lord Ufford, with instructions to treat with the native chieftains, the tenants of the crown, and the corporations of the boroughs:⁴¹ but before that nobleman could execute his commission, Edward Bruce, the brother of the king of Scots, with an army of six thousand men, had landed in the neighbourhood of Carrickfergus. He was immediately joined by the O'Nials, who directed his march. They burnt Dundalk: the greater part of Louth was laid desolate: and at Atherdee the inhabitants, men, women, and children, who had crowded into the church, perished in the flames. But the approach of Butler the lord deputy,⁴² and of the earl of Ulster, warned the confederates to return. They retired to Conyers, left their banners flying in their camp, and making a short circuit, fell on the rear of their pursuers. A fierce encounter took place: but the English were dispersed, and Bruce, continuing his retreat, dispatched the earl of Moray to Scotland for reinforcements.⁴³

May 25.

June 29.

Sep. 11.

Sep. 15.

During this interval a new envoy arrived from Edward, John de Hotham, afterwards bishop of Ely, invested with extraordinary powers, to re-

⁴¹ Rym. iii. 510. It appears there were four towns governed by mayors, Dublin, Waterford, Cork, and Ross: and three royal burghs, with a reeve and bailiffs, Kilkenny, Drogheda, and Trim. The other towns in Ireland belonged to their respective lords.

⁴² I adopt this term, as more familiar: the original title is justiciary.

⁴³ Annal. Hib. apud Cand. ann. 1315.

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IV.

concile the barons, and to treat with the natives.⁴⁴ The dissensions of the barons had prevented them from uniting their forces: some of them were even accused of having invited the Scots: several were privately suspected of corresponding with Bruce. With much difficulty Hotham formed an association among the tenants of the crown, who bound themselves under the penalty of forfeiture, to aid each other to the utmost in their efforts against the common enemy.⁴⁵ With the chiefs of the natives he was less successful. They detailed to him the history of their grievances, and complained that it was the policy of their oppressors to raise an insuperable barrier between them and the throne. They offered, however, to hold the lands, to which they laid claim, immediately of the king, provided they might enjoy the advantage of the English laws, or to make him the umpire between themselves and his barons, and to submit to such demarcation of their respective possessions, as he in his wisdom should deem just. To these proposals they never received, probably did not wait to receive, an answer:⁴⁶

1316.
Jan. 25. for Bruce had now obtained a reinforcement from Scotland: he penetrated as far as Kildare, defeated the English at Arseol in that county,

Feb. 14. and as he returned, obtained a second victory at

⁴⁴ Rym. iii. 532.⁴⁵ Rym. iii. 547. Annal. Hib. ann. 1315.⁴⁶ Apud Ford. xii. 51.

Kenlys in Meath. His presence animated the Irish of Leinster. The O'Tooles, O'Briens, O'Carrolls, and Archbolds, were instantly in arms: Arklow, Newcastle, and Bree, were burnt; and the open country presented one continued scene of anarchy and devastation.⁴⁷

It is probable that in these inroads the Scots suffered many severe losses. They returned to their former quarters in Ulster, and sent again to Scotland for succours. But at the same time a treaty was concluded between Edward Bruce and Donald O'Nial, called in Edward's writs prince of Tyrone, but who styled himself hereditary monarch of Ireland. By letters patent the rights of O'Nial were transferred to Bruce, who was immediately crowned, and entered on the exercise of the regal power.⁴⁸ But his inactivity abandoned to destruction the different sept, that had joined him during his late expedition. Two hundred of the natives perished under O'Hanlan at Dundalk: three hundred were slain in Munster: four hundred fell in a battle at Tullagh; and eight hundred heads of the O'Moores were sent by the lord deputy to Dublin as the proof of his victory. From these losses Ireland might have arisen: but her hopes were extinguished in the sanguinary field of Athenree, where Phelim O'Connor the king of Connaught, attacked the lord Richard Birming-

He is
crowned.

May 2.

Aug. 10.

⁴⁷ Annal. Hib. ann. 1315.

⁴⁸ Apud Ford. xii. 32.

CHAP.
IV.

ham. The natives, in a confused mass, rushed on a resolute and disciplined enemy: the battle or slaughter lasted from dawn till sunset: and among eleven thousand dead bodies, were found those of Phelim himself, and of twenty-nine subordinate chieftains of the same name. The sept of the O'Connors was nearly extinguished.⁴⁹

Is joined
by the
king of
Scots.

Sep. 12.

1317.
Jan. 1.

Mar. 12.

Mar. 31.

May 1.

To balance the exultation caused by this victory, intelligence was brought to Dublin that Robert Bruce the king of Scotland, had landed with a numerous army in Ulster. The garrison of Carrickfergus, after a most obstinate defence, was compelled to surrender. The two brothers, at the head of twenty thousand men, Scots and Irish, advanced into the more southern counties: and the citizens of Dublin were induced to burn the suburbs for their own protection. But the Scots, unprepared to besiege the place, ravaged the country. They successively encamped at Leixlip, Naas, and Callen; and at last penetrated as far as the vicinity of Limerick. But it was the depth of winter: numbers perished through want, fatigue, and the inclemency of the season: and the English had assembled an army at Kilkenny to intercept their return. With difficulty the Bruces eluded the vigilance of the enemy, and retired by Cashel, Kildare, and Trim, into Ulster. It is not easy to assign the reason of

⁴⁹ Annal. Hib. ann. 1316.

this romantic expedition, undertaken at such a season, and without any prospect of permanent conquest. To the Scots it was more destructive than a defeat: and Robert Bruce, dissatisfied with his Irish expedition, hastened back to his native dominions.⁵⁰

Notwithstanding the severe defeats, which the natives had suffered, the flame of patriotism was kept alive by the exhortations of many among the clergy. The English government complained of their conduct to the papal court; and John XXII. commissioned the archbishops of Dublin and Cashel to admonish those who fomented the rebellion, and to excommunicate all who should persist in their disobedience. This commission created a deep sensation among the septs: a justification of their conduct was signed by O'Nial and the majority of the chieftains: and the memorial was transmitted to the cardinals Joscelin and Fieschi, legates in Scotland, to be forwarded through them to the pontiff. This important instrument begins by stating, that during forty centuries Ireland had been governed by its own monarchs of the race of Milesius, till the year 1170, when Adrian IV. an Englishman, conferred, against all manner of right, the sovereignty of the island on Henry II., the murderer of St. Thomas, whom, for that very crime, he ought rather to have deprived of

Irish memorial to the pope.

⁵⁰ Annal. Hib. ann. 1316, 1317.

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IV.

his own crown ;⁵¹ that since that period perpetual war had raged between the Irish and English, to the destruction of at least fifty thousand individuals on each side : and that the latter had gradually established their dominion over the fairest portion of the island ; while the former were still compelled to fight for the bogs and mountains, the only possessions which remained to them in their native land. After this introduction, it argues that the original grant is become void, because none of the conditions on which it was made, have been fulfilled. Henry had promised for himself and his successors to protect the church ; and yet they had despoiled it of one half of its possessions ; to establish good laws, and they had enacted others repugnant to every notion of justice ;⁵² to extirpate the vices of the natives, and they had introduced among them a race of men more wicked than existed in

⁵¹ We may excuse the four thousand years attributed to the succession of their kings : but it is singular, that they were not aware of the anachronism in making Adrian live after the murder of the archbishop, though he died twelve years before it.

⁵² The laws of which they chiefly complained are, 1. That though the king's courts were open to every man, who brought an action against an Irishman, yet, if a native were the plaintiff, the very fact of his birth was allowed to be an effectual bar to his claim : 2. That if an Irishman was murdered, whatever were his rank in the church or state, no court would undertake to punish the murderer : 3. That no widow, if she were a native, was admitted to the claim of dower : and, 4. That the last wills of the natives were declared void, and their property disposed of according to the will of their lords. Ford. xii. 23.

any other country upon earth ; men whose rapacity was insatiable ; who employed indifferently force or treachery to effect their purposes ; and who publicly taught that the murder of an Irishman was not a crime.⁵³ It was to free themselves from the oppression of these tyrants that they had taken up arms : they were not rebels to the king of England, for they had never sworn fealty to him : they were freemen waging mortal war against their foes : and for their own protection they had chosen Edward de Bruce earl of Carrick, for their sovereign. They concluded with expressing a hope, that the pontiff would approve of their conduct, and would forbid the king of England and his subjects to molest them for the future.⁵⁴ This memorial appears to have made a deep impression on the mind of John, who both wrote to the king,⁵⁵ and commissioned his legates to speak to him, in favour of the Irish. Urged by their repeated remonstrances Edward attempted to justify himself by declaring, that if they had been oppressed, it was without his knowledge, and contrary to his intention ; and promised that he would take them under his protection, and make it his care,

⁵³ In support of this charge they produce four instances of treachery and murder. Ford. xii. 29, 30. We should, however, recollect that they are the accusations of an enemy. Three of them are mentioned in the annals, but without any notice either of the causes, or the real authors. Annal. ad ann. 1277. 1282. 1305.

⁵⁴ See Fordun, xii. 26—32.

⁵⁵ Bullar, tom. i. Joan. XXII. const. iv.

CHAP.
IV.Edward
Bruce is
killed.1318.
Oct. 5

that they should be treated with lenity and justice.⁵⁶

This promise was hardly given, before the war in Ireland was terminated. Sir Roger Mortimer had been intrusted with the government, and during the year of his administration, though it was distinguished by no signal victory, he had gradually confirmed the superiority of the English. The barons accused of favouring the Scots, particularly the Lacies were attainted: the earl of Ulster, who had been imprisoned by the officious loyalty of the citizens of Dublin, was released: and the O'Briens and Archbolds were received to the king's peace. The men of Connaught by their dissensions aided the cause of their enemies: and no less than eight thousand of them are said to have perished in a civil war. Soon after the departure of Mortimer, Bruce advanced to Fagher in the neighbourhood of Dundalk. He was met by John lord Birmingham, and fell in battle with the greater part of his forces. His quarters were sent, as those of a traitor, to the four principal towns: his head was presented by the conqueror to Edward, from whom he received the dignity and emoluments of earl of Louth.⁵⁷ With Bruce fell the hopes of the Irish patriots: the ascendancy of

⁵⁶ Rym. iii. 727, 728.⁵⁷ Annal. Hib. ann. 1318.

Rym. iii. 767. "He was slayn by his owne wilfulness, that wold not tary for his ful company, that were almost at hand." *Lel. Coll.* ii. 547.

the English was restored : and the ancient system of depredation and revenge universally prevailed. The king's attention was, however, directed to the state of Ireland, by a petition presented to him in parliament, stating that, to establish tranquillity, it was requisite that charters of pardon for the murder of Englishmen should be abolished, and that the natives, admitted to the benefit of the English law, should fully enjoy the legal protection of life and limb. Both points were granted : and it was afterwards provided that no royal officer should acquire lands within the extent of his jurisdiction, or levy purveyance, unless it were in case of necessity, with the permission of the council, and under a writ from the chancery.⁵⁸

Not to interrupt the chain of events, I have conducted the Irish war to its termination by the fall of Edward Bruce : we may now revert to the concerns of England, where the people had forgotten the disastrous battle of Bannock-burn amid the more dreadful calamities which oppressed them. For three years they groaned under the two most direful scourges, that can afflict the human race, pestilence and famine. The deficiency of the harvest in 1314 had created an alarm ; and the merchants of Newcastle, and probably those of the other ports, obtained the royal licence to purchase corn in France, and

Famine
and pesti-
lence.

⁵⁸ Rot. Parl. i. 336. Ryley, 569. 574.

CHAP.

IV.

1315.

Feb. 3.

import it into England. But the supply was so scanty, that the parliament, which assembled in February, fixed a maximum on the price of provisions.⁵⁹ This measure was of no avail. In defiance of the statute the price of every article rapidly advanced: wheat, pease, and beans were sold at twenty shillings the quarter: and even the king's family found it difficult on some occasions to procure bread for the table. Unfortunately the following season was preternaturally wet and stormy: the more early crops were damaged by the rain: the others never ripened at all: and before Christmas the scarcity of the preceding year had been doubled. To add to the calamity a pestilential disease raged among the cattle: and the want of nourishment, and the insalubrity of the food, produced dysenteries and other epidemic disorders among the people. The parliament, convinced by experience of its error, repealed the maximum;⁶⁰ and the king, at the suggestion of the citizens of London, suspended the breweries, as a measure "without which not only the indigent but the middle classes must inevitably have perished through want of food." Still the prices continued to

1316.
Feb. 2.

⁵⁹ The following are the prices. A fat ox fed with corn, 24s.—not fed with corn, 16s.—A fat cow, 12s.—A fat hog, two years old, 3s. 4d.—A fat sheep, unshorn, 1s. 3d.—shorn, 1s. 2d.—A fat goose, 2½d.—A fat capon, 2d.—A fat hen, 1d.—Two chickens, 1d.—Four Pigeons, 1d.—Twenty-four eggs, 1d. Wals. 106, 107. Brady, 120.

⁶⁰ Rot. Parl. i. 351.

advance till the quarter of wheat sold for ten times its usual value; and the poor were reduced to feed on roots, horses, dogs, and the most loathsome animals. Even instances are recorded, which for the honour of human nature we may hope to be untrue, of men eating the dead bodies of their companions, and parents those of their children.⁶¹

The continuance of the calamity had taught the most extravagant to economize their resources. Many expelled from their castles the crowds of domestics and dependants, with whom they usually swarmed: and these unfortunate men, without the lawful means of support, were necessitated to live by the plunder of their former patrons, or of their inoffensive neighbours. Every county was infested with bands of robbers, whose desperate rapacity was not to be checked by the terrors or the punishments of the law. The inhabitants were forced to combine for their own protection: association was opposed to association: summary vengeance was inflicted by each party: and the whole country presented one great theatre of rapine, anarchy, and bloodshed.⁶²

During this period of unexampled distress, the Scots, emboldened by their late victory, and the timidity of their enemies, repeatedly poured

Dispute
respecting
the ordi-
nances.

⁶¹ Wals. 107, 108. Trokel. 37. Mon. Malms. 166.

⁶² Wals. 107, 109.

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over the borders, and ravaged with impunity the northern counties. On the eastern coast they pushed their depredations as far as the Humber, on the western as far as the river Lune. The attempts of the inhabitants to stop the progress of the plunderers, invariably ended in their own destruction: and all projects of defence or revenge formed by the king's council, were defeated by the dissensions between him and the principal barons. Both obstinately persisted, they in demanding, he in refusing the execution of the "ordinances." If he summoned them to attend their duty in parliament, or to accompany him against the Scots, they constantly alleged that, till the ordinances were enforced, their presence might be attended with consequences fatal to themselves. Occasionally, yielding to the pressure of circumstances, Edward seemed to acquiesce: the earl of Lancaster was placed at the head of the administration;⁶³ and the barons flattered themselves that they had carried their favourite measure. But the king as often seized the first opportunity to emancipate himself from the dominion of his subjects: and always found among his nobility

⁶³ In 1316, March 3, the earl accepted the presidentship of the council on three conditions: that he should be allowed to resign, if the king refused to follow his advice; that nothing of consequence should be done till he had been consulted; and that unprofitable counsellors should be removed from time to time by authority of parliament. These terms were entered at his demand on the rolls. Rot. Parl. i. 352.

persons willing to link their own fortune to that of their sovereign. The two parties viewed each other with distrust and aversion: even when they lived in apparent harmony, their real animosity was only smothered for the occasion: and the most trifling accident, a lawsuit or a private quarrel, would rekindle it with more than its former fury. Each accused the other of a clandestine alliance with the king of Scots. Lancaster pretended that by intercepting a messenger he had obtained possession of the original instrument signed by Edward himself. It is difficult to believe that any one could be deceived by so palpable a falsehood. The royalists retorted the charge, and clothed their assertions with so much probability, that the earl thought it necessary to offer wager of battle to any man, who should dare to renew the accusation.

If the king of Scotland relied on these dissensions for the security of his own kingdom, when he sailed to the assistance of his brother in Ireland, his hopes were not disappointed. Edward hastened to York; made the necessary preparations; and summoned his military tenants to follow him to Newcastle: but the great barons disobeyed; and by their disobedience the golden opportunity was lost. The king lingered for some months in the north: and the plan of invasion was exchanged for a few predatory incursions, which generally ended in the discomfiture of the aggressors. He returned to London to

Negotia-
tion with
Scotland.

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meet the cardinals Joscelin d'Ossat and Luca de Fieschi, the legates of John XXII. That prelate had lately ascended the papal throne: and hoped to distinguish the commencement of his pontificate by terminating the destructive war, which had now raged for more than ten years between England and Scotland. The legates brought with them letters of exhortation to each prince, and a bull, in which the pope of his own authority proclaimed a truce to last for two years, as a preparatory step to a permanent peace. Edward submitted respectfully to a mandate, which it is probable that he had secretly procured: and the royal orders for the suspension of hostilities were immediately issued. The cardinals proceeded to Durham,⁶¹ and sent to request a safe conduct from Bruce, who had now returned to his dominions. After much difficulty and many affected delays, the

Sept.

⁶¹ They went in company with the lord Henry Beaumont and his brother Louis, bishop elect of Durham. Between Rushyford and Ferry-hill, about six leagues from Darlington, they were suddenly attacked by a band of robbers, who had concealed themselves in the wood of Ache. The cardinals lost all their property, but were allowed to go forward: the Beaumonts were retained in captivity, till they had paid exorbitant ransoms. Rym. iii. 663. 666 669. Ang. Sac. i. 738. Gilbert de Middleton the captain of the robbers, on account of the arrest of his cousin Adam de Swinburn, had called to his standard a number of outlaws and adventurers, and plundered with impunity the counties of Northumberland and Durham. He was afterwards taken in the castle of Mirford by treachery, and suffered the death of a traitor at London. Scala Chron. in Lel. Coll. ii. 548.

messengers were admitted into the royal presence. He listened with apparent respect to the exhortation from the pontiff, but refused to open the letters from the legates, because they were addressed to "The noble lord Robert de Brus, the *ruler* of Scotland." The messengers observed, that while a controversy was pending, it became not the holy see to give to either of the parties a title, which might prejudice the right of the other. "But you give me," replied Bruce, "a title which prejudices my right. I am a king, and acknowledged for a king by foreign powers. I can receive no letters which are not directed to me as a king, nor can I give an answer to your request till I have consulted my parliament. You shall hear from me after the feast of St. Michael."⁶⁵ The legates returned to London, and long after the appointed time received an answer, signed by Bruce, his earls and barons, and stating that till he was acknowledged king of Scotland, he should decline entering into any negotiation either with them or their messengers.⁶⁶ Mortified by this refusal, they published with due solemnity the papal truce in London, and ordered Adam Newton, guardian of the friars minors in

Publica-
tion of the
papal
truce.

⁶⁵ Rym. iii. 661. 663.

⁶⁶ Rym. iii. 798. The object of this bull has been mistaken by lord Hailes. It empowers the cardinals to continue the process, though their legation had expired. It contains historical particulars, not to be found elsewhere.

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IV.

Dec. 16. Berwick, to notify its publication to the Scots. Newton executed his commission with some art. He obtained a safe conduct to Old Cambus, where the Scots were employed in making preparations for the siege of Berwick. Bruce refused to see him, or to receive his letters; but he took the opportunity to proclaim the truce with a loud voice in the midst of the multitude which surrounded him. He was instantly ordered to depart; his petition for a passport was refused: and before he had gone far, he was seized by four men, who robbed him of his letters, stripped him to the skin, and bade him farewell. The friar however pursued his way to Berwick, and gloried in having fulfilled the object of his mission.⁶⁷

It is violated by
the Scots.
1313.

March 23. In defiance of the papal truce the Scots persevered in their attempt to reduce Berwick. It was not probable that they could make much progress in the depth of winter: but the citizens harboured a traitor of the name of Spalding, who entered into a correspondence with the enemy. He betrayed to them the post where he kept guard: the town was taken by surprise: and after a few days the castle surrendered.⁶⁸ The fall of Berwick was followed by the reduction of Wark, Harbottle, and Mitford: Northallerton, Boroughbridge, Scarborough, and Skipton, were burnt: and

May.

⁶⁷ Rym. 683. 793.

⁶⁸ Wals. 111. Moor, 594. Barb. 347.

Rippon would have experienced the same fate, had it not been redeemed by the payment of a thousand marks. Irritated by these proceedings, the cardinals solemnly declared that Bruce and his associates had incurred the sentence of excommunication, previously fulminated against those, who should violate the truce ; and taking leave of Edward, returned to the papal court at Avignon.⁶⁹

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IV.

July.

Aug. 25.

The loss of Berwick was deemed a national disgrace : and even the earl of Lancaster and his partisans united with Edward to recover it. The town was invested on all sides : and was defended by the Stewart of Scotland with a numerous garrison. Bruce hastened to raise the siege : but despairing of success, dispatched fifteen thousand men under Randolf and Douglas to surprise the queen Isabella at York, and to ravage the country. They failed in the first object : but their devastations were so extensive, that the archbishop, at the head of the posse of the county, determined to oppose them at Boroughbridge. He was defeated : three hundred clergymen, ten times that number of laymen, fell by the sword, or perished in the river. The disastrous intelligence soon reached the camp before Berwick. The former dissensions were revived : the barons of the south proposed to continue the siege : but Lancaster with his

Truce between
England
and Scotland.
1319.

Sep. 20.

⁶⁹ Rym. 707. 799, 860, 858.

CHAP.
IV.

1320.
Jan. 1.

Scottish
memorial
to the
pope.
1320.
April 6.

friends departed: and Edward, weakened by their absence, made a fruitless attempt to intercept the Scots in their return.⁷⁰ Wearied out with repeated failures, he began to wish for peace: while his adversary was not less anxious to be reconciled with the court of Rome. The first proposal for a negotiation came from Scotland: the demand of the regal title was waived: and a truce for two years was concluded between “Edward king of England, and sir Robert de Brus for himself and his adherents.”⁷¹

This suspension of hostilities was employed by the king of Scotland in an attempt to make his peace with the holy see. A parliament was assembled at Aberbrothick, and a common letter, signed by eight earls and thirty-one barons in the name of the commonalty of Scotland, was sent by the royal messengers to the pontiff. This instrument stated that the Scots had settled in the north of Britain about twelve hundred years after the passage of the Red Sea, and had been converted to the faith by the preaching of the apostle St. Andrew: that they had always enjoyed their independence, till Edward I. had seized the opportunity to impose on them the yoke of England, at a moment when their throne was vacant: that they had since been freed from the English yoke by Robert de Brus, whom the divine providence, the legal succession which

⁷⁰ Wals. 112. Ford. xii. 37.

⁷¹ Rym. iii. 806. 809.

they were determined to maintain, and their due and unanimous consent had raised to the throne : but that, were he to abandon them, they would treat him as an enemy, would choose another king, and defy the dominion of England as long as a hundred Scots remained alive. Liberty was their object : and liberty, no good man would wish to survive.—Having thus in the most forcible language declared their resolution, they request the pontiff to employ his influence with the king of England, and advise him to be content with his own dominions, which once were deemed sufficiently ample for seven kings ; and to leave to the Scots their own barren soil, the most remote of habitable lands : but which was dear to them, because it was their own, and which it was their only object to possess in peace.—They then conclude in these words.

“ Should, however, your holiness give too credulous an ear to the reports of our enemies, and persist in favouring the pretensions of the English, we shall hold you responsible before God for the loss of lives, the perdition of souls, and every other calamity which must arise from the continuance of the war between the two nations. As far as our duty binds us, we are your obsequious children : to you, as to the vicegerent of God, we shall yield that obedience which is due : but to God, as the supreme judge, we commit the protection of our cause. We cast all our care upon him,

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“ confident that he will enable us to ‘ *do valiantly, and will tread down all our enemies.*’ ” ⁷²

This letter convinced the pontiff, that the cause of Edward was desperate. He treated the envoys with kindness, and at their request consented to suspend the process against the king of Scotland for twelve months, and afterwards for an additional half year. To the king of England he wrote a letter of advice, and earnestly exhorted him to improve the present opportunity, and conclude a useful and lasting peace. Edward assented: commissioners from the pope and king of France were appointed to attend the congress: and hopes were confidently entertained of a favourable result. But the conferences, if any were held, proceeded slowly: the king of England was too much occupied with the rebellion of his barons to attend to other concerns: and Bruce expected to obtain better terms by aiding the rebels, than by treaty with the sovereign.⁷³

The English barons rebel.

It was the singular fate of Edward that either he could not live without an unworthy favourite, or could not admit another to his friendship without wounding the arrogance of his barons. Lancaster had formerly obtruded on the king one of his own creatures to fill the office of

⁷² Ford. xiii. 2, 3. Anderson, Diplom. Scot. Tab. lii.

⁷³ Rym. iir. 346. 348. 367. 384. 391.

chamberlain. The young man, whose name was Hugh Spenser, by his talents and assiduity soon acquired the esteem of his sovereign : the disposal of the royal favours was by degrees intrusted to his discretion : and his marriage with a daughter of the late earl of Gloucester gave him possession of the greater portion of the county of Glamorgan. His growing opulence awakened the jealousy of his former superiors. He was described as haughty, covetous, and ambitious ; epithets, which in the mouths of those who applied them, may perhaps only prove, that, as he had devoted himself to the service, he had been rewarded by the gratitude, of his prince. It chanced that John de Mowbray had taken possession, without asking the royal licence, of an estate belonging to his wife's father, and contiguous to the lands of the favourite. He pretended that he had only availed himself of the liberty of the marches : Spenser maintained that for the omission the fief was by law forfeited to the crown. The lords of the marches immediately associated for the defence of their rights : at the head of eight hundred men at arms, five hundred hobblers, and ten thousand footmen, they entered the lands of the favourite, reduced his ten castles, and burnt, destroyed, or carried off all the property on his twenty-three manors. After this exploit they marched into Yorkshire, and claimed the protection of the earl of Lancaster, the fomentor

1321.
May 3.

CHAP.

IV.

June 28.

and patron of every faction. An indenture, binding the parties to prosecute the two Spensers, father and son, till they should fall into their hands, or be driven into banishment, and to maintain the quarrel to the honour of God and holy church, and the profit of the king and his family, was signed on the one part by the earl of Hereford and the lords of the marches, on the other by the earl of Lancaster and thirty-four barons and knights. The elder Spenser, whose fate was thus connected with that of his son, was a respectable gentleman, far advanced in age, whose only crime seems to have been his near relationship to the favourite, and his influence in the king's council. Lancaster led the confederates towards the capital, allowing them to live at free quarters on their march, and to plunder the estates belonging to the elder Spenser.⁷⁴

Aug. 2.

From St. Alban's he sent a message to

⁷⁴ I will add the estimate of their losses delivered to parliament by the two Spensers, that the reader may form some idea of what constituted the wealth of a nobleman at these times.

The elder Spenser.—His crop in the barn, and that on the ground; 28,000 sheep; 1000 oxen and heifers; 1200 cows, with their calves for two years; 40 mares; 160 cart-horses; 2000 pigs; 300 goats; 40 tuns of wine; 601 fitches of bacon; 80 carcasses of beef; 600 of mutton in the larder; 10 tuns of cider; arms and armour for 200 men.

The younger.—40 mares, with their issue of two years; 11 stallions; 160 heifers; 400 oxen; 500 cows, with their calves for two years; 10,000 sheep; 400 pigs; arms and armour for 200 men; his crop on the ground; provisions for his castles, as corn, wine, honey, salt, salt meat, and salt fish; the rents of his tenants

Edward, requiring the banishment of the father and son, and an act of indemnity for the confederate barons. The king replied with spirit, that the elder Spenser was beyond the sea employed in his service, the younger with his fleet, guarding the cinque ports: that he would never punish the accused before they had an opportunity of answering their accusers: and that it was contrary to the obligation of his coronation-oath, to pardon men who disturbed the tranquillity of his kingdom.⁷⁵

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The parliament was now sitting at Westminster: and Lancaster advancing to London, cantoned his followers in the neighbourhood of Holborn and Clerkenwell. The confederates spent a fortnight in secret consultations. At length they proceeded to Westminster, filled the hall with armed men, and, without informing the king of their intentions, ordered a paper to be read. It was an act of accusation against the Spensers, consisting of eleven counts,⁷⁶ and

The Spensers banished.

Aug. 19.

amounting to 1000*l.*; and the debts due to him to the amount of 3000*l.* See Rot. Parl. iii. 361—363.

⁷⁵ Wals. 113, 114. Moor, 595 Ad Murim. 55.

⁷⁶ The first count recited a writing made by the young Spenser, and conceived to teach treason. As it is curious, I will translate it. "Homage and oaths of allegiance regard the crown more than the king's person, and bind more to the crown than to the person; and this appears from the fact, that before the crown descends to any one, no homage is due to any person. Hence in the case that the king is not guided by reason in exercising the rights of the crown, his lieges are bound by their oath to the crown, to bring back the king and the state of the crown

CHAP.

IV.

charging them with usurping the royal power, estranging the king from the great lords, appointing judges, who did not know the law, advising unconstitutional measures, and requiring fines from all persons who solicited grants from the crown: and concluded with these words: "Therefore we the peers of the land, earls and barons, in the presence of our lord the king, do award, that Hugh le Despenser the son, and Hugh le Despenser the father, be disherited for ever, and banished from the kingdom of England, never to return, unless it be by assent of the king, and by assent of the prelates, earls, and barons, in parliament duly summoned: and that they quit the realm by the port of Dover before the next feast of St. John the Baptist; and that if they be found in England after that day, or ever return, they be dealt with as enemies of the king and kingdom." Against this sentence the prelates pro-

"by reason, otherwise the oath would not be kept. The question then remains how the king is to be brought back: by suit of law, or by force? By suit of law no man can do it: for if he can have no other judges but those appointed by the king: and of course, if the will of the king be not conformable to reason, the error will be maintained and confirmed. It follows then, that to keep the oath of allegiance, when the king will not redress grievances, and do away what is bad for the people and dangerous for the crown, it must be done away by force: for by their oaths both the king is bound to govern his people, and his lieges are also bound to govern in aid of him, and in his default." Statutes at large, vol. x. App. p. 16. Rot. Parl. iii. 363. That the barons should declare this doctrine to be treasonable, is strange, since they themselves, at the very moment, were acting upon it.

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IV.

tested in writing: but the king and the barons of his party, intimidated by the armed men in attendance, gave their assent: the banishment of the two Spensers was duly entered on the rolls: and a general pardon was granted to the earl and his associates, for all trespasses committed by them or their followers since the commencement of February.⁷⁷

The king felt the indignity which had been offered to his authority, and two months did not elapse before he had an opportunity of revenging it. The queen, on her way to Canterbury, proposed to lodge during the night in the royal castle of Ledes. The custody of the castle had been intrusted by Edward to the lord Badlesmere, a man, who had lately betrayed to the confederates the secrets of his master, and by their means had obtained a special pardon for his transgressions.⁷⁸ He was absent; but the lady Badlesmere refused admission to the queen; and during the altercation several of the royal attendants were killed. Isabella complained loudly of this insult: the chivalrous feelings of the nation were aroused: and the king found himself in a condition to demand and enforce redress. Badlesmere avowed the act of his wife, and the lords of the marches advanced to his assistance, but Edward took the castle,

King takes
up arms.
Oct. 13.

Oct. 31.

⁷⁷ Statutes, 13. Rot. Parl. i. 364.

⁷⁸ Rym. iii. 890. Stat. x. App. 19.

CHAP.
IV.

Receives
the Spen-
sers.

hanged Colepepper the governor and eleven of his knights, sent the others to different prisons, and confined in the Tower the lady Badlesmere and her female attendants.⁷⁹

This act of vigour infused new life into the king's friends; many came forward with the offer of their services; and the two Spensers successively returned to England. The younger, in obedience to the law, surrendered himself a prisoner: but at the same time presented a petition that the judgment against him might be reversed: 1. Because he had been neither appealed in court, nor allowed to answer: 2. Because the whole process had been contrary to the form of the great charter; and, 3. Because he had been condemned by men, who, in defiance of the king's writ, had come to parliament with arms in their hands. Edward referred the petition to the consideration of the prelates, who were then assembled in convocation, and requested their advice. They replied that they had always protested against the award as contrary to law, and therefore prayed that it might be repealed: the four earls of Kent, Richmond, Pembroke, and Arundel, declaring that they had assented to it through fear, joined in the petition of the prelates: and the king, supported by their opinion, gladly took the fa-

⁷⁹ Rym. iii. 897, 898. Wals. 114, 115. Moor, 595. Trokel. 52. Irel. Coll. i 273.

vourite and his father under the royal protection, till a parliament should assemble to repeal the award enacted against them.⁸⁰

CHAP.
IV.

The popularity of the earl of Lancaster had been for some time on the decline. It was evident, that the success of the Scots in their destructive inroads, was owing to the pertinacity with which he had opposed all the measures of government. Men believed that, had he not so precipitately left the army before Berwick, the place must have fallen; and that his departure had been purchased by Bruce with a present of forty thousand pounds. These charges may have been invented by his enemies: but after the return of the Spensers, his traitorous intelligence with the Scots becomes evident from the original documents, which are still extant. He immediately summoned all the barons of his party, to meet him in council at Doncaster; and soon afterwards sent an emissary, Richard de Topcliffe, to confer with Douglas in the castle of Jedburgh. In a fortnight the truce expired: the Scots under Randolph and Douglas burst into Northumberland, and Topcliffe resumed his negotiation at Corbridge. It was at length concluded that the king of Scots, Randolph, and Douglas, with their forces, should join the earls of Lancaster and Hereford on an appointed day; should live and die with them in their quarrel;

Lancaster
treats with
the Scots.

Nov. 29.

Dec. 7.

Dec. 21.

1322.
Jan. 16.

⁸⁰ Rot. Parl. iii. 362, 363. Rym. iii. 907.

CHAP.
IV.

should protect their friends and injure their enemies; but on no account should lay claim to any conquest within the kingdom of England: and that on the other part the earls should never give their aid in any expedition against Scotland, but should do their best that Bruce should enjoy his dominions in peace.⁸¹ In the mean time the king aware of these proceedings, had collected his forces: as he advanced, the lords of the marches burnt Bridgenorth, and fled to the earl of Lancaster; and the castle of Tickhill was instantly besieged by the united army of the confederates. It resisted their attempts till the arrival of Edward: when the insurgents took possession of Burton upon Trent, and for three days defended the bridge over the river. But the royalists passed by a ford; and Lancaster hastily retired into Yorkshire. At Pontefract he wrote in his own name, and in the names of Hereford and his associates, to the king of Scots,⁸² and then continued his retreat with seven hundred cavalry, in the hope of meeting the army of his allies. At Boroughbridge his progress was arrested by sir Simon Ward, and sir Andrew Harclay, the governors of York and Carlisle, who had collected a strong force on the opposite bank of the river. Hereford attempted to make his way over the bridge, but was slain by a Welshman stationed below, who through a cre-

⁸¹ Rym. 907. 924. 938.

⁸² Rym. iii. 927.

CHAP.
IV.He is made
prisoner.

March 16.

vice thrust his lance into the bowels of the earl, Lancaster had led his men to a ford, but they were repulsed by the archers on the opposite bank. He offered a bribe to Harelay, which was refused: and then solicited a truce till the following morning. A faint ray of hope still cheered his spirits. It was possible that the Scots might arrive during the night. But this hope was disappointed: at daybreak his fate was apparent; and on receiving a summons to yield, he retired into the chapel, and looking on the crucifix, exclaimed: "Good lord, I render
" myself to thee, and put me into thy mercy." The captors conducted him by water to York, and thence to his castle of Pontefract.⁸³ In general, when our kings had obtained the mastery over their refractory barons, they had been content with the feudal punishments of forfeiture and exile: but Edward, irritated by the repeated indignities which he had suffered, and persuaded that disobedience had been hitherto encouraged by his lenity, determined to overawe the malcontents by the severity of his resentment. To this motive we may attribute the execution of sixteen among his captives: the fate of the earl

⁸³ Rym. iii. 927. 931. 934. 937—940. Knyghton, 2540. Irel. Coll. ii. 464. He was probably carried to Pontefract, because at the return of Edward from the siege of Berwick, the earl and his men came out of the castle, and jeered the king as he passed by. *Acclamaverunt in ipsum regem vilissime et contemptibiliter.*—Rym. iii. 933. Wals. 116.

CHAP.

IV.

March 22.

And be-
headed.

of Lancaster was perhaps aggravated by a recollection of the part which he had formerly taken in the murder of Gaveston. He was arraigned before the king, six earls, and the royal barons : of his guilt there could be no doubt : he was told that it was useless to speak in his defence ; and was condemned to be drawn, hanged, and quartered as a traitor. In consideration of his royal descent, Edward commuted this ignominious punishment for decapitation : but the spectators and ministers of justice were careful to display their loyalty, by heaping indignities on their unfortunate victim. As he was led to execution on a grey pony without a bridle, with his confessor, a friar-preacher, by his side, they pelted him with mud, and taunted him with the title of king Arthur, the name which he had assumed in his correspondence with the Scots.⁸⁴ “ King of heaven,” he cried, “ grant me mercy, for the king of earth hath forsaken me.” The cavalcade stopped on an eminence without the town, and the earl knelt down with his face to the east. But he was ordered to turn to the north, that he might look towards his friends ; and while he remained in that posture, his head was struck off by an executioner from London.⁸⁵

Revision
of the or-
dinances.
May 2.

From Pontefract Edward repaired in triumph to York, where the parliament had assembled.

⁸⁴ Rym. iii. 926.⁸⁵ Rym. iii. 939. Wals. 116. Lel. Coll. ii. 464, 465, 474. Eighteen others were executed in different places. Ibid.

All the members were, or pretended to be, royalists: and every measure proposed by the crown was carried without opposition. The “ordinances” underwent a rigorous examination. Some were confirmed as beneficial to the nation: the rest were declared unconstitutional, and trenching on the prerogative of the crown. To prevent any future attempts similar to those of the “ordainers,” it was enacted, that thenceforth no provisions made by the king’s subjects, acting under any commission whatsoever, should be of force, if they affected the rights of the sovereign: and that all laws respecting “the estate of the crown, or of the realm and people, must be treated, accorded, and established in parliament by the king, by and with the assent of the prelates, earls, barons, and commonalty of the realm.” At the same time the petitions of the Spensers were heard and granted: and the award against them was ordered to be struck out of the rolls. The father was created earl of Winchester, and received several of the forfeited estates as a compensation for his losses.⁸⁶ The son recovered his former ascendancy: but instead of profiting by the fate of Gaveston, gloried to tread in the footsteps of that favourite, and by his ostentation and arrogance prepared the way for his own murder, and that of his royal benefactor.

The victory which Edward had gained over his

Inroad of
the Scots.

⁸⁶ Brady, 140—146. Stat. at large, x. App. 19, 21.

CHAP.
IV.

domestic enemies, inspired him with the hope of wiping away the disgrace of Bannock-burn, and of re-establishing his superiority over the kingdom of Scotland. With this view he assembled the most numerous army that England had seen for many years. But its apparent strength proved its real weakness: and the impossibility of supplying provisions for such a multitude of men disappointed the hopes of the king and the nation. The Scots as they retired swept the country before them: the English could neither overtake the flying enemy nor subsist in a desert: and Edward, after advancing as far as the Forth, was compelled to return without performing one splendid action, or achieving a single conquest. Nor was this the only disgrace. Having appointed guardians of the marches and disbanded his army, he remained in security in Yorkshire. But the Scots had formed a plan to surprise him. Riding day and night, they suddenly appeared before the abbey of Biland, where the king lay, made an attack on the knights who accompanied him, and took Henry de Sully, a French nobleman, and John de Bretagne, earl of Richmond. Edward flew with precipitation to York. The Scots followed: remained till evening at the gates defying the garrison; and in their return ravaged the country without opposition.⁸⁷

Aug. 12.

Oct. 14.

⁸⁷ Wals. 117. Moor, 596. Barb. 385—394. Ford. xiii. 4.

CHAP.
IV.Treason of
Harcley.

It was generally believed that this inroad of the Scots must have been effected with the connivance of some one holding a command on the borders : and the royal suspicion was soon fixed on Harclay, who for his services at Boroughbridge had been rewarded with the earldom of Carlisle, and made warden of the western marches. It was discovered that he had been engaged in a negotiation with the king of Scotland : when Edward invited him to his court at York, he refused to obey ; and sir Henry Fitz-Hugh soon afterwards arrested him by command of the king. On his trial he was convicted of having bound himself by writing and oath to maintain Bruce and his heirs on the throne of Scotland : that an agreement had been named between them to name conjointly twelve persons, who should regulate the concerns of the two kingdoms ; and that he had induced many to swear to the observance of this treaty. If these charges were true, we may conclude that Harclay's elevation had impaired his understanding or that he had consented to become the agent of the Lancastrian faction, which, though it languished in a state of depression, had not abandoned the hope of revenge. He was condemned to be degraded, and to suffer the punishment of a traitor.⁸⁸

1323.
March 3.

⁸⁸ Rym. iii. 983. 983. 994. 999, 1000. The sentence was drawn up at York, and sent to the judges. It was in substance as follows : Whereas our lord the king, on account of the loyalty which he

CHAP.
IV.

Truce
with Scot-
land.

May 30.

At length the destructive war, which with a few pauses had now continued three-and-twenty years, and had repeatedly involved one half of Scotland, and the northern counties of England, in bloodshed and misery, began to draw to a close. Bruce was sensible that his kingdom required a long interval of tranquillity to repair the havoc of so many campaigns: and experience had taught Edward to doubt of the ultimate success of any attempt to enforce his claim of superiority. The proposal was made by the Scots: Bruce consented to waive his title in the treaty: and a suspension of arms was concluded for thirteen years between the two nations, to remain in force till the end of that term, even in the

thought he had observed in you, Andrew Harclay, made you earl of Carlisle, and with his own hand girded you with the sword, and gave you a fee of the county, with castles, towns, lands, and tenements, to support the estate of an earl: and yet you have traitorously, falsely, and maliciously gone to Robert Bruce to maintain him in opposition to the will of the king, this court doth award that you shall be degraded, and lose the title of earl for yourself and your heirs for ever; and that you shall be ungirded of your sword, and that your spurs of gold shall be struck from your heels. And whereas you, Andrew, the liege man of our lord the king, contrary to your homage, faith, and allegiance, have traitorously gone to Robert Bruce, the mortal enemy of our lord the king, &c., this court doth award that for the same treason you shall be drawn and hanged, that your heart, bowels, and entrails, from which these traitorous thoughts proceeded, shall be plucked out, and burnt to ashes, and the ashes be scattered in the wind, and that your body shall be divided into quarters, and your head shall be placed on London bridge for an example, that others may learn not to commit such treasons against their liege lord. Rym. 999.

event of the death of one, or of both of the contracting parties.⁸⁹

CHAP.
IV.

Escape of
Mortimer
to France.

At peace with foreign nations, and with his own subjects, Edward might now hope to enjoy that tranquillity, to which he had so long been a stranger. But the Lancastrian party was not extinct: a conspiracy to surprise and murder the elder Spenser taught the king to tremble for the safety of the two favourites: and a bold though unsuccessful attempt to break open the prisons, and liberate the knights who had been taken at Boroughbridge, awakened the jealousy and vigilance of the royal ministers. One captive, however, Roger lord Mortimer of Wigmore, the man whose activity and resentment they most feared, had the good fortune to effect his escape. He had twice been convicted of treason, and twice owed his life to the clemency of the king. Wearied with his confinement,⁹⁰ he corrupted the fidelity of Girard de Asplaye, one of the officers in the Tower, who, in an entertainment which he gave to the wardens, infused a soporiferous drug into their drink. While they slept, Mortimer made his way through the wall of his chamber into the kitchen of the palace: a ladder of ropes aided him to mount and descend several walls: and a boat on the edge of the water conveyed him across the Thames. There

⁸⁹ Rym. 1022, 1023.

⁹⁰ Packington says he had received information that he would be executed. *Lel. Coll.* ii. 467.

CHAP.
IV.

he found his servants and horses, rode to the coast of Hampshire, and embarking in a ship which was prepared for him, escaped to France. Edward, ignorant of his motions, issued different writs for his apprehension : Mortimer entered into the service of Charles de Valois, and in a short time wreaked his vengeance on the prince, who had refused to take his life, when it was forfeited to the law.⁹¹

The king
of France
invades
Guienne.

Charles le bel had now succeeded his brother Philip on the throne of France. Of the real object of this prince in his subsequent quarrel with the king of England, it is impossible to form a correct notion : this only is evident, that he sought pretexts for hostilities, and rejected with disdain the most equitable offers. He complained that Edward had not attended at his coronation, nor done him homage for Guienne ; and that his town of St. Sardos had been unlawfully destroyed by the seneschal of that dutchy. The king replied that he had never been summoned to do homage : that the town of St. Sardos was notoriously within his own territories : that he was ignorant of the conduct of his seneschal : but if that officer had done wrong, he should answer for it in the court of the dutchy. At the same time he offered to do homage at an appointed day, if the French army were to be recalled from Guienne : and to refer the subject of their quar-

⁹¹ Rym. iv. 7. 9. 20. 22. Knyght. 2543. Moor, 596. Bland. 84.

rel to the equity of the peers of France, or the arbitration of the pope. But Charles was inexorable : his army overran the Agenois : and it was only by the surrender of Reoles, the last fortress in the province, that Edmund earl of Kent, and brother to Edward, could purchase a truce for a few months.⁹²

During this interval the pontiff employed all his influence to restore peace between the two kings. Edward, though he had made preparations for war, professed himself ready to make every sacrifice consistent with his honour: Charles, on the contrary, spoke of nothing but conquest, and haughtily refused to listen to any proposals. It was, however, artfully suggested to the papal envoys, that if the queen of England would visit the French court, the king might grant to the solicitations of a sister what he would withhold from an indifferent negotiator.⁹³ Edward fell into the snare : Isabella proceeded to France with a splendid retinue : and a treaty was concluded, which will remind the reader of the deception practised in the last reign with respect to the same dutchy. The troops of Charles were to retire into his own territories, those of Edward to the neighbourhood of Bayonne : possession of Guienne was then to be given to the king of France, who would name a seneschal unexceptionable to both parties, and restore the province

CHAP.
IV.

Sept. 22.

The queen
goes to
France.

1325.
Mar. 8.

May 31.

⁹² Rym. iv. 90. 95. 100. Wals. 120, 121.

⁹³ Rym. iv. 140.

CHAP.
IV.

to Edward as soon as he had done homage, but would retain the Agenois, till his right had been decided by the peers of France ; and, if their award were not in his favour, till he had received compensation for the expenses of the war.⁹⁴ When this ignominious treaty was communicated to Edward, an answer was required in the course of the week : his council anxious to avoid the blame declined to give him advice on a subject which demanded the decision of his parliament : and the king, after some days, reluctantly approved of the conditions which had been stipulated by his wife. He now began his journey to France to do homage at Beauvais, but was detained at Dover by sickness, and sent a messenger to Charles to account for his delay.⁹⁵ Whether the dark plot which soon astonished the nations of Europe, had already been formed, we have not the means of knowing : but an answer was returned, that if Edward would transfer the possession of Guienne and Ponthieu to his son, Charles, at the prayer of Isabella, would receive the homage of the young prince on the same terms, on which he had consented to receive that of the father. The offer, though it bore a suspicious aspect, was accepted : the necessary resignations were made ; and the young Edward, a boy of twelve years of age, after promising his father to hasten his return, and not to marry

June 30.

Aug. 24.

And
prince
Edward.
Sept 10.

⁹⁴ Rym. iv. 153.

⁹⁵ Rym. iv. 163.

during his absence, sailed with a splendid retinue to the French coast.⁹⁶ But to the general astonishment, though the ceremony was speedily performed, week after week passed away, and neither mother nor son appeared inclined to revisit England. Mortimer had joined Isabella at Paris: he was made the chief officer of her household: and it was soon publicly known that the daughter of France and queen of England, had abandoned her husband to become the mistress of a rebel and exile.⁹⁷

CHAP.

IV.

Sep. 12.

Edward would probably have borne without regret the absence of a faithless wife: but his only son was in her company; and her court had become the great resort of his enemies. He repeatedly ordered her to return, and was repeatedly disobeyed. His letters to the king and peers of France, to the pope, to his "dame," and his "fair son," are still extant; and completely disprove the pretext by which she sought to justify her absence, her apprehensions from the hostility of Hugh Spenser. The king affirms that such fears are a mere pretence: that she had never betrayed the least suspicion of Spenser in England: that at her departure she had taken leave of him as a friend; and during her absence had written to him letters of compliment and esteem: that since her marriage she had always been treated with honour and

They refuse to return.

Dec. 1.

⁹⁶ Rym. iv. 163. 165. 168.⁹⁷ Wals. 122.

CHAP.
IV.

kindness ; and that if he himself had sometimes “ spoken to her words of chastisement,” it was always in secret, and because she had deserved it by her follies.⁹⁸ Her designs, however, began

⁹⁸ Rym. iv. 130. 191. 200. 210. For the gratification of the curious, I shall translate some of the letters, which passed on this occasion. 1^o. Letter from the queen to the archbishop of Canterbury: “ Most reverend father in God, we have carefully perused “ the letter by which you require us to return to the company of “ our most dear and dread lord and friend ; and assure us that sir “ Hugh Spenser is not our enemy, but even, as you say, wishes “ our good. At this we marvel much : for neither you nor any “ one of sound mind can believe that we would abandon the com- “ pany of our said lord without good and reasonable cause, and “ unless it were to escape the danger of our life, and through fear “ of the said Hugh, who has the government of our said lord, and “ of his whole kingdom, and who would dishonour us to the best “ of his power, as we are certain and know from experience, though “ we dissembled to escape the danger. Truly there is nothing we “ desire so much after God and our salvation, as to be in the com- “ pany of our said lord, and to live and die in the same. We “ therefore beg of you to excuse us : for in no manner can we “ return to the company of our said lord, without putting our “ life in danger, on which account we are in greater grief than we “ can express.” At Paris, Wednesday after Candlemas (Apol. Ad. Orleton, 2767). 2^o. The king to the queen: “ Dame—Several “ times both before the homage and since, we have ordered you to “ return to us immediately, and without any excuse. But before “ the homage you excused yourself, because your presence was “ necessary for the prosecution of our concerns : and now you “ have sent us word that you will not come, through the danger “ and fear of Hugh Spenser : at which we marvel with all “ our might : the more so, since both you and he treated each “ other in so friendly a manner before us, and even at your de- “ parture you gave him promises, signs, and proofs, of certain “ friendship, and afterwards sent him the kindest letters, and that “ not long ago ; which letters he has shewn to us. And truly, “ dame, we know, and so do you, that he has always procured

to unfold themselves. Levies of troops were made in her name: the barons of the Lancastrian faction were requested to join her at her arrival in England: reports the most dishonourable to the king were circulated both at home and abroad: and orders were transmitted from the young prince to the lords of Guienne, in opposition to those which Edward had given as administrator for his son. Among the king's envoys to the court of France, the bishop of Exeter, a minister of irreproachable integrity, was peculiarly obnoxious to the party: and an

“ for you all the honour in his power: and that since you came into our company, no evil or disgrace has ever been done to you; unless perhaps sometimes through your own fault (if you will but remember) we have spoken to you, as we ought, words of chastisement in secret, without any other severity. Neither ought you, as well on account of God and the laws of holy church, as our honour and your own, for any earthly reason to transgress our commands, much less to avoid our company. Therefore we command and charge you, that laying aside all feigned reasons and excuses, you come to us immediately in all haste.” At Westminster, Dec. 1st.—3^o. From the king to the prince. After ordering him to return, and to refuse his assent to any marriage, the king adds the following postscript. “ Edward, fair son, though you are of tender age, take these our commands tenderly to heart, and perform them humbly and quickly, as you wish to escape our anger and heavy indignation, and love your own profit and honour. And follow no advice contrary to the will of your father, as the wise king Solomon teaches you, and send us word immediately what you mean to do: knowing this, that if we find you hereafter disobedient to our will, we will take care that you shall feel it to the last day of your life, and that other sons shall learn from your example, not to disobey their lord and father.” (Rym. iv. 181. 212.)

CHAP.
IV.

attempt to take his life compelled him to return to England. He was followed by the majority of those who had composed the retinue of the queen and prince, and who were now dismissed that they might not be employed as spies on her proceedings. At the same time the king of France, to distract the attention, or multiply the perplexities of the English government, sent bodies of troops to make inroads into Guienne. Edward was fully aware of his danger. He ordered the retailers of false news to be arrested, and all letters from foreign parts to be seized: he wrote again and in stronger terms to his son and the king of France; and

1326.
March 13. he at last declared war against the latter for the invasion of Guienne, and the detention of his wife and of the presumptive heir of his crown.⁹⁹

June 12.

July 6. Charles, who still affected to be ignorant of the dishonour of his sister, was at last induced by a letter of severe but merited reproach from the pope to dismiss her from Paris: but he had secretly prepared an asylum for her in the court of his vassal, William count of Hainault. Here all her plans were matured under the direction of Mortimer. She signed a contract of marriage between her son Edward and Philippa the second daughter of the count: a body of more than two thousand men at arms under John de Hainault was placed at her disposal: all the

⁹⁹ Rym. iv. 183. 192. 196. 206. 209. 211, 212. 213.

exiles of the Lancastrian faction crowded round her person : and on the twenty-fourth of September she landed with her followers at Orewell in Suffolk.¹⁰⁰

We are told that the original projector of the invasion was Adam Orleton, bishop of Hereford, who had been deeply engaged in Lancaster's conspiracy, and had lost his temporalities as the punishment of his treason.¹⁰¹ This wary and experienced politician founded his hopes of success on the probable co-operation of the two parties, which had hitherto divided the nation. He was secure of the aid of his former friends. A revolution alone could restore them to their estates, or furnish them with the means of revenge. The royalists, though attached to the king, were dissatisfied with the ascendancy of his favourite : and every true knight must deem it a duty to reconcile with her husband a young queen, who had been driven from the court by the insolence of an upstart. The ulterior designs of the conspirators were carefully concealed : and the apparent integrity of their professions seduced many from their allegiance. Of the envoys, whom Edward had sent to France, his brother, the earl of Kent, his cousin the earl of Richmond, the lord Beaumont, and the bishop of Norwich, joined Isabella : though

CHAP.

IV.

But land
with an
army.

Sep. 24.

The queen
is joined
by great
numbers.

¹⁰⁰ Moor, 598. Wals. 123. Rym. iv. 231. Avesbury, 4.

¹⁰¹ Moor, 596, 597. Rym. iv. 257.

CHAP.
IV.

Sept. 23.

his fleet had been ordered to assemble at Orwell three days before the arrival of the enemy, it was perfidiously directed to a different port: and even Robert de Watteville, who had been dispatched to oppose the invaders, ranged his forces under the banners of the queen and her son. The unfortunate monarch knew not whom to trust: and afraid to summon the military tenants of the crown, issued commissions to array the men of the neighbouring counties, ordered all who should be found in the invading army, with the exception of his wife, his son, and his brother, to be treated as enemies: and offered a free pardon, with a reward of one thousand pounds, for the head of Mortimer.¹⁰²

Isabella, at her landing, was hailed as the deliverer of the country. The Lancastrian lords hastened to meet her: the primate supplied her with a sum of money to pay her followers: and the king's other brother, the earl of Norfolk, with three bishops, repaired to her camp. Letters were immediately written to the remaining prelates and barons to allure them to her party, by the exposition of her views, and an exaggerated statement of her present force, and of the succours which she expected from her brother the French king. But at Wallingford proposals were heard, which alarmed the real authors of the expedition. The new comers

¹⁰² Rym. iv. 225. 231. 233. 237.

professed themselves hostile to the Spensers: but talked of restoring the queen to her husband, and of compelling him to govern by the advice of his parliament. The principal among them were immediately summoned to a council, in which Orleton, by the command of Isabella, accused the passionate and revengeful temper of Edward, detailed several real or pretended instances of his brutal conduct to the queen, and solemnly asserted that in the present circumstances she could not return to his society without evident danger to her life.¹⁰³ At the same time it was determined to issue a proclamation, which, while it pointed the public hatred against the favourite, was studiously silent with respect to the intended system of government. It stated that the queen, the prince, and the earl of Kent, were come to free the nation from the usurped tyranny of Hugh Spenser, who had disinherited the crown of its rights, deprived the church of its possessions, irritated the king against his queen and his son, attainted, murdered, or exiled the great men of the realm, robbed widows and orphans of their property, and aggrieved the people by unlawful exactions. They, therefore, required the assistance of every good and loyal subject, as they had no other object in view but the ad-

Oct. 15.

¹⁰³ Apolog. Ad. Orlet. 2766. Her pretended fears of violence from the king were believed, and have been repeated by most of our historians.

CHAP.
IV.

vantage of the church and of the realm. But the emissaries, who distributed this proclamation, were instructed to inform the people, that the pope had excommunicated all who should bear arms against the queen, had absolved the king's vassals from their allegiance, and had sent two cardinals to give to the undertaking the sanction of the apostolic see.¹⁰⁴

Edward
is forced
to flee.

At the queen's approach towards the capital, Edward, as a last resource, threw himself on the loyalty and pity of the citizens. Their answer was cold but intelligible. The privileges of the city would not, they observed, permit them to follow the king into the field: but they would shut their gates to the foreigners, and would on all occasions pay due respect to their sovereign, his queen, and his son. Edward immediately departed with the two Spencers, the chancellor Baldock, and a slender retinue: and the moment he was gone, the populace rose, murdered the bishop of Exeter, took forcible possession of the Tower, and liberated the prisoners. The fugitive monarch hastened to the marches of Wales, where lay the estates of his favourite. Bristol was given to the custody of the elder Spenser, earl of Winchester: and at Caerfilly an attempt was made to raise the men of Glamorgan. But the Welshmen were equally indifferent to the distress of their lord, and of

Oct. 15.

Oct. 16.

Oct. 19.

¹⁰⁴ Rym. iv. 236. Moor, 593.

their sovereign : and Edward with his favourite took shipping for Lundy, a small isle in the mouth of the Bristol channel, which had been previously fortified, and plentifully stored with provisions.¹⁰⁵

CHAP.
I V.

The queen was not slow to pursue her fugitive consort. As she passed through Oxford, she commanded Orleton to preach before the university. The bishop selected for his text that passage in Genesis : “ I will put enmity “ between thee and the woman, and between “ thy seed and her seed. She shall bruise thy “ head.” These words he applied to Isabella and the Spencers ; but many thought that they discovered in the sermon dark and prophetic allusions to the fate which afterwards befel the unfortunate Edward. From Oxford she hastened to Bristol : and the earl of Winchester, un-

The elder Spenser is taken and executed.

Oct. 26.

¹⁰⁵ Ang. Sac. i. 366. Wals. 123, 124. Moor, 593—600. Rym. iv. 233.

CHAP.
IV.

of Lancaster. In these tumultuous times the liberty of defence was seldom allowed to a political prisoner: but the notoriety of the facts charged in the indictment was assumed as a justification of the sentence which immediately followed. The earl was drawn from the court to the place of execution, where his enemies glutted their revenge with the sight of his sufferings. He was embowelled alive: his body was afterwards hung on a gibbet for four days, and then cut into pieces and thrown to the dogs.¹⁰⁶

Edward is
taken.

At Bristol it was ascertained that Edward had put to sea; and a proclamation was immediately made through the town, summoning him to return and resume the government. This farce was preparatory to an important decision of the prelates and barons in the queen's interest. Assuming the powers of parliament, they resolved that by the king's absence the realm had been left without a ruler: and therefore appointed the young prince guardian of the kingdom in the name and by the right of his father.¹⁰⁷ Edward's evil fortune pursued him by sea as well as land. He was unable to reach the isle of Lundy: and after contending for some days with a strong westerly wind, he landed at Swansea, retired to Neath, and sought to elude the search of his enemies by conceal-

Oct. 26.

Nov. 10.

¹⁰⁶ Apolog. Ad. Orlet. 2765. Wals. 125. Lel. Coll. ii. 468.

¹⁰⁷ Rym. iv. 237.

CHAP.

IV.

ing himself in different places between that monastery and the castle of Caerfilly. At length, Henry earl of Leicester, who had lately taken the title of his attainted brother the earl of Lancaster, corrupted the fidelity of the natives, and got possession of Spenser and Baldock, who were secreted in the woods near the castle of Lantressan. Edward, it is said, immediately came forward, and voluntarily surrendered to his cousin, by whom he was sent to the strong fortress of Kenilworth. *His* fate was postponed to answer the purposes of his wife : the other captives were sacrificed without mercy to the resentment of their enemies. Baldock, as a clergyman, was confined first in the prison of the bishop of Hereford, and afterwards in that of Newgate, where he sank under the rigours of his captivity : Spenser was arraigned at Hereford before the same judge, whose hands were still reeking with the blood of his father. The offences laid to his charge form the best proof of his innocence. According to Trussel he had been the cause of every calamity which had befallen the kingdom since his return from banishment, of the failure of the king's expedition into Scotland, and of the success of the Scottish incursions into England. He had not only persecuted the earl of Lancaster and his adherents to death, but when God had demonstrated the virtue of that nobleman by the supernatural cures wrought at his tomb, he had

Nov. 17.

Execution
of the
younger
Spenser.
Nov. 21.

CHAP.

IV.

placed guards to prevent the afflux of the people, and to suppress the knowledge of the miracles:¹⁰⁸ he had constantly fomented the dissension between Edward and his consort; had hired assassins to murder the queen and the prince when they were in France; and at their return had conveyed away the king and the royal treasures against the provisions of the great charter. "Therefore," continues this upright judge, "do all the good men of this realm, lesser and greater, poor and rich, award with common assent that you, Hugh Spenser, as a robber, traitor, and outlaw, be drawn, hanged, embowelled, beheaded, and quartered. Away then, traitor: go, receive the reward of your tyranny, wicked and attainted traitor!" He was drawn in a black gown with the arms of his family reversed, and a wreath of nettles on his head: and was hanged on a gallows fifty feet high, amidst the acclamations and scoffs of the populace. A few yards below him suffered Simon de Reading, a faithful servant, who had always adhered to the fortunes of his master. Besides these the earl of Arundel and two other

¹⁰⁸ It was pretended that miracles had been wrought at his tomb, and on the hill, where he was beheaded. In consequence, a guard of fourteen men at arms, was appointed to prevent all access to the place. *Lel. Coll.* ii. 466. Soon after the coronation of the young king, a letter was written at the request of the commons in parliament to the pope, to ask for the canonization of Lancaster, and of his friend, Robert archbishop of Canterbury. The request was not noticed. *Rym.* iv. 268 *Rot. Parl.* ii. 7.

CHAP.
IV.

gentlemen were beheaded. They had remained neutral during the invasion; but were accused of having consented to the death of the earl of Lancaster. In the opinion of the public, their chief crime was the contiguity of their possessions to those of the queen's favourite, to whom they were granted.¹⁰⁹

From Hereford Isabella with Mortimer and her son proceeded by slow journeys to meet the parliament at Westminster. The session was opened by a long speech from that crafty politician, the bishop of Hereford. The removal of the Spensers from the person of the king, the only ostensible object of the party, had now been effected: and it was natural to ask why Edward, in whose name the parliament had been summoned,¹¹⁰ was not restored to the exercise of the royal authority. To obviate this difficulty, he painted in strong colours the vindictive disposition which it suited him to ascribe to the captive monarch, and solemnly declared that to liberate him now would be to expose to certain death the princess, who by her wisdom and courage had so lately freed the realm from the tyranny of the royal favourites. He therefore requested them to retire, and to return the next day, prepared to answer this important ques-

The prince
is declared
king.

1327.
Jan. 7.

¹⁰⁹ Knyght, 2546—2549. Moor, 600. Wals. 125. Lel. Coll. ii. 463.

¹¹⁰ It had at first been summoned in the name of the prince as guardian of the realm: but as this supposed Edward to be absent, a second summons had been issued in the king's own name.

CHAP.

IV.

Jan. 8.

tion, whether it were better that the father should retain the crown, or that the son should reign in the place of his father. At the appointed hour the hall was filled with the most riotous of the citizens of London, whose shouts and menaces were heard in the room occupied by the parliament. Not a voice was raised in the king's favour. His greatest friends thought it a proof of courage to remain silent. The young Edward was declared king by acclamation, and presented in that capacity to the approbation of the populace. The temporal peers, with many of the prelates, publicly swore fealty to the new sovereign: the archbishop of York, and the bishops of London, Rochester, and Carlisle, though summoned by the justiciaries, had the resolution to refuse.¹¹¹

The king
is deposed.

These irregular proceedings had probably been pursued to extort from the members an assent, from which they could not afterwards recede. Though the prince was declared king, his father had neither resigned, nor been deposed.

Jan. 13.

To remedy the defect, a bill of six articles was exhibited against Edward by Stratford bishop of Winchester, charging him with indolence, incapacity, the loss of the crown of Scotland, the violation of the coronation oath, oppression of the church, and cruelty to the barons. In the presence of the young prince seated on the

¹¹¹ Ang. Sac. i. 367.

throne, these charges were read and approved : and it was resolved that the reign of Edward of Carnarvon had ceased, and that the sceptre should be intrusted to the hands of his son, Edward of Windsor.

CHAP.
IV.

When this resolution was reported to the queen, she acted a part which could deceive no one. With the most violent expressions of grief, she lamented the misfortune of her husband, declared that the parliament had exceeded its legitimate powers, and exhorted her son to refuse a crown which belonged to his father. To silence her pretended scruples, a deputation was appointed consisting of prelates, earls, and barons, with two knights from each county, and two representatives from each borough. They were instructed to proceed to Kenilworth, to give notice to Edward of the election of his son, to procure from him a voluntary resignation of the crown, and if he refused, to give him back their homage, and to act as circumstances might suggest. The bishops of Winchester and Lincoln, a secret and an open enemy, were the first who arrived. They employed arguments, and promises, and threats, to obtain the consent of the unfortunate king ; spoke of the greatness of mind he would display, and of the reward he would deserve, by renouncing the crown to restore peace to his people ; promised him, in the event of his compliance, the enjoyment of a princely revenue

And made
to resign.

Jan. 20.

CHAP.

IV.

and establishment; and threatened, if he refused, not only to depose him, but to pass by his son, and choose a sovereign from another family. When they had sufficiently worked on his hopes and fears, they led him, dressed in a plain black gown, into the room, in which the deputation had been arranged to receive him. At the sight of Orleton his mortal enemy, who advanced to address him, he started back, and sank to the ground: but recovered in a short time sufficiently to attend to the speech of that prelate. His answer has been differently reported by his friends and opponents. According to the former he replied that no act of his could be deemed free, as long as he remained a prisoner: but that he should endeavour to bear patiently whatever might happen. By the latter we are told that he expressed his sorrow for having given such provocation to his people; submitted to what he could not avert; and thanked the parliament for having continued the crown in his family. Sir William Trussel immediately addressed him in these words: "I, William Trussel, procurator
" of the earls, barons, and others, having for this
" full and sufficient power, do render and give
" back to you Edward, once king of England,
" the homage and fealty of the persons named
" in my procuracy: and acquit and discharge
" them thereof, in the best manner that law and
" custom will give. And I now make protesta-
" tion in their name that they will no longer be in

“ your fealty or allegiance, nor claim to hold
 “ any thing of you as king, but will account you
 “ hereafter as a private person, without any
 “ manner of royal dignity.” The distressing
 ceremony was closed by the act of sir Thomas
 Blount, the steward of the household, who, as
 was always done at the king’s death, broke his
 staff of office, and declared that all persons
 engaged in the royal service were discharged.¹¹²

Jan 24.

In three days the deputation returned from
 Kenilworth, and the next morning the acces-
 sion of the new sovereign, who was in his four-
 teenth year, was proclaimed by the heralds in
 the following unusual form : “ Whereas sir Ed-
 “ ward late king of England, of his own good
 “ will, and with the common advice and assent
 “ of the prelates, earls, barons, and other nobles,
 “ and all the commonalty of the realm, has put
 “ himself out of the government of the realm,
 “ and has granted and willed that the govern-
 “ ment of the said realm should come to sir
 “ Edward, his eldest son and heir, and that *he*
 “ should govern the kingdom, and should be
 “ crowned king, on which account all the lords
 “ have done him homage ; we cry and publish
 “ the peace of our said lord sir Edward the son,
 “ and on his part strictly command and enjoin,
 “ under pain and perils of disherison, and loss of
 “ life and member, that no one break the peace

¹¹² Moor, 600, 601. Wals. 126. Knyght, 2549.

CHAP.
IV.

“ of our said lord the king. For he is and will
“ be ready, to do justice to all and each of the
“ said kingdom, both to the little and the great,
“ in all things, and against all men. And if
“ any one have a claim against another, let him
“ proceed by way of action, and not by violence
“ or force.” The same assertion, that the late
king had resigned of his own free will with the
consent of his parliament, was unblushingly
repeated at the coronation of the young prince.¹¹³

Feb. 1.

Edward is
murdered.

Edward of Carnarvon (for so we must now
call him) was destined to add one to the long
catalogue of princes, to whom the loss of a
crown has been but the prelude to the loss of
life. The attention of the earl of Lancaster to
alleviate the sufferings of his captive, did not
accord with the views of the queen and her
paramour. He was given to the custody of sir
John de Maltravers, a man who, by his former
sufferings, had proved his attachment to the
party. To conceal the place of Edward's resi-

¹¹³ Rym. iv. 243—245. The expenses of this coronation
amounted to 2335*l.* 18*s.* 2*d.* under the following heads:—

	£.	s.	d.
Pantry - - - - -	45	17	6
Butlery - - - - -	188	14	8½
Kitchen and poultry - - - - -	584	10	4
Saltery and saucery - - - - -	215	0	0
Great wardrobe - - - - -	1367	5	7½
Private wardrobe - - - - -	216	18	5½
Hall and chamber - - - - -	20	1	1
Stable - - - - -	13	8	3½
Wages - - - - -	4	10	3
Making three halls - - - - -	179	12	0

dence, he successively transferred the prisoner from Kenilworth to Corfe, Bristol, and Berkley, and by the indignities which were offered to him, and the severities which were inflicted, laboured to deprive him of his reason, or to shorten his life. It was in vain that the deposed monarch solicited an interview with his wife, or to be indulged with the company of his children. Isabella had not the courage to face the husband, whom she had so cruelly injured, nor would she trust her sons in the presence of their father. Though in possession of the sovereign power, she was still harassed with the most gloomy apprehensions. In several parts of the kingdom associations were known to exist for the avowed purpose of liberating the captive: her scandalous connexion with Mortimer was publicly noticed by the clergy in their sermons: and there was reason to fear that the church might compel her by censures to cohabit with her consort. To prevent the last she had recourse to her usual expedient. As her son led an army against the Scots, she called an assembly of prelates and barons at Stamford, laid before them her pretended reasons for dreading the sanguinary vengeance of her husband, and prevailed on them to declare that, even if she desired it, they would not permit her to return to the society of Edward of Carnarvon.¹¹⁴

CHAP.
IV.
April 4.

April 23.

¹¹⁴ Apol. Ad. Orlet, 2767. Rym. iv. 304. Moor, 601.

CHAP.
IV.

Sept. 21.

Thomas lord Berkley, the owner of Berkley castle, was now joined with sir John Maltravers, in the commission of guarding the captive monarch. It chanced that the former was detained at his manor of Bradley by a dangerous malady, during which the duty of watching the king devolved on two of his officers, Thomas Gourney, and William Ogle. One night while he was under their charge, the inmates of the castle were alarmed by the shrieks which issued from his apartment: the next morning the neighbouring gentry, with the citizens of Bristol, were invited to behold his dead body. Externally it exhibited no marks of violence: but the distortion of the features betrayed the horrible agonies in which he had expired; and it was confidently whispered that his death had been procured by the forcible introduction of a red-hot iron into the bowels. No further investigation was made; and the corpse was privately interred in the abbey church of St. Peter in Gloucester.¹¹⁵

¹¹⁵ Rot. Parl. ii. 52. 54. Rym. iv. 312. Knyght. 2551. Murim. 70, 71. Moor, 603. Moor ascribes the king's death to the contrivance of Orleton, but the charge is probably groundless, as he had been for some months out of the kingdom on an embassy to the papal court (Rym. iv. 276), where he was deprived of his bishopric, but at length procured in its place the see of Worcester (Ang. Sac. i. 533). On Moor's authority also it has been said that the actual murderers were Maltravers and Gourney: but though Maltravers was condemned by the same parliament which condemned the murderers, it was for a different crime, which forms a presumption that he was innocent of this (Rot. Parl. ii. 53). Ac-

The first Edward had been in disposition a tyrant. As often as he dared, he had trampled on the liberties, or invaded the property of his subjects ; and yet he died in his bed, respected by his barons, and admired by his contemporaries. His son, the second Edward, was of a less imperious character : no acts of injustice or oppression were imputed to him by his greatest enemies : yet he was deposed from the throne, and murdered in a prison. Of this difference between the lot of the father and the son, the solution must be sought in the manners and character of the age. They both reigned over

cording to the judgment of the house of peers in 1330, Mortimer commanded (he confessed it before his death, *Ibid.* 62), Gourney and Ogle perpetrated, the murder. Mortimer suffered death, the other two had fled out of the kingdom ; but a reward of 100*l.* was offered for the apprehension, or of 100 marks for the head, of Gourney, and another reward of 100 marks for the apprehension, and of 40*l.* for the head of Ogle (*Rot. Parl.* ii. 54). What became of Ogle, I know not : Gourney fled into Spain, and was apprehended by the magistrates of Burgos. At the request of the king of England, he was examined by them in the presence of an English envoy. What disclosures he made, were kept secret : but we may suppose that they implicated persons of high rank, as the messengers, who had him in charge, received orders to check him at sea on his way to England (*Rym.* iv. 483, 489, 490, 491). With respect to the lord Berkley, he was tried at his own demand before a jury of knights, and acquitted. The king, however, ordered him to be put under the custody of sir Ralph Nevill, till the next parliament, for having placed officers of a bad character near the person of his father (*Rot. Parl.* ii. 57). But in the next parliament, at the request of the lords, he was permitted to be at large, till the truth could be learned from Gourney, *who was still alive* (*Rot. Parl.* ii. 62). From these words it is probable that Ogle died before the capture of Gourney.

CHAP.
IV.

proud and factious nobles, jealous of their own liberties, but regardless of the liberties of others; and who, though they respected the arbitrary sway of a monarch as haughty and violent as themselves, despised the milder and more equitable administration of his successor. That successor, naturally easy and indolent, fond of the pleasures of the table and the amusements of the chase, willingly devolved on others the cares and labours of government. But in an age unacquainted with the more modern expedient of a responsible minister, the barons considered the elevation of the favourite as their own depression, his power as the infringement of their rights. The result was what we have seen, a series of associations, having for their primary object, the removal of evil counsellors, as they were called, from the person of the prince, but which gradually invaded the legitimate rights of the crown, and terminated in the dethronement and assassination of the sovereign. For the part which Isabella acted in this tragedy, no apology can be framed. The apprehensions of danger to her life, under which she attempted to conceal her real purposes, were of too flimsy a texture to blind the most devoted of her partisans: nor could she palliate her adulterous connexion with Mortimer by retorting on her husband the charge of conjugal infidelity.¹¹⁶ In

¹¹⁶ Moor, 601.

a few years her crime was punished with the general execration of mankind. She saw her paramour expire on a gibbet, and spent the remainder of her life in disgrace and obscurity.

CHAP.
IV.

I must not close this account of Edward's reign without noticing the abolition of the knights templars. That celebrated order was established in 1118 by the patriarch of Jerusalem, and originally consisted of nine poor knights, who lived in community near the site of the ancient temple, and took on themselves the voluntary obligation of watching the roads in the neighbourhood of the city, and of protecting the pilgrims from the insults of robbers and infidels.¹¹⁷ By degrees their number was surprisingly augmented: they were the foremost in every action of danger: their military services excited the gratitude of christendom: and in every nation legacies were annually left, and lands successively bestowed on the templars. But wealth and power generated a spirit of arrogance and independence, which exasperated both the civil and ecclesiastical authorities. As long indeed as the knights were usefully employed against the infidels, their enemies were silent: but after their expulsion from the holy land, they indulged in indolence and luxury, and reports the most prejudicial to the reputa-

Abolition
of the or-
der of
templars.

¹¹⁷ Wil. Tyr. xii. 7.

CHAP.
IV.1307.
Oct. 12.

tion of the order began to be circulated and credited. Philip le bel had repeatedly denounced it to the pope Clement V.: and at last, impatient of delay, ordered all the knights in his dominions to be arrested, and on examination obtained from many a confession of the most shocking and infamous practices. Clement was dissatisfied with the precipitance of the king: but to stay the proceedings would have been to proclaim himself the protector of guilt, and he therefore reserved the future prosecution of the inquiry to the apostolic see. In different bulls addressed to the sovereigns of christendom, he detailed the charges brought against the order, of profligacy, idolatry, and apostacy: requested that the knights in their respective territories might be placed in confinement: and appointed judges to inquire into their guilt or innocence.¹¹⁸ In England and Ireland they were all apprehended on the same day, and kept in safe but honourable custody.¹¹⁹ The process against them lasted for three years: and if it be fair to judge from the informations taken in England, however we may condemn a few individuals, we

1308.
Jan. 7.

¹¹⁸ Rym. iii. 30. 101.

¹¹⁹ One of the king's clerks was sent to the sheriff of each county with an order for him to take a certain number of good and lawful men, and with them to swear to execute the sealed orders, which the bearer should deliver to him. These were then opened, and authorized the arrest of the templars. Rym. iii. 34. 43.

must certainly acquit the order.¹²⁰ The result of the inquiries made in the different countries was laid before the pontiff in the council of Vienne; and after much deliberation he published a bull, suppressing the institute, not by way of a judicial sentence establishing its guilt, but by the plenitude of his power, and as a measure of expediency rather than of justice.¹²¹ That the property of the templars might be still preserved for the purposes for which it had been originally given, it was determined to transfer it to the knights hospitallers: but when the papal bull, containing this ordinance, arrived in England, Edward suspended its execution for more than a year: and if he at last assented, it was not till he had made a protestation, that he did it for objects of national utility, and without abandoning his own right or the right of any of his subjects to the possessions in question.¹²² Eleven years later he consulted the judges, who replied that by the law of the land, all the possessions of the templars had reverted as escheats

CHAP.
IV.

1312.
March 22.

May 2.
Aug. 1.

1313.
Nov. 21.

¹²⁰ The whole process may be seen in Wilkins, ii. 329—400.

¹²¹ Non per modum definitivæ sententiæ, cum eam super hoc secundum inquisitionem, et processum super his habitos non possemus ferre de jure, sed per viam provisionis seu ordinationis apostolicæ. Rym. iii. 323.

¹²² Rym. iii. 451. 457. The king had ordered that the master of the templars in England should be allowed two shillings per day, the other knights four pence per day for their support out of their former property. Rym. iii. 327. 319. 472.

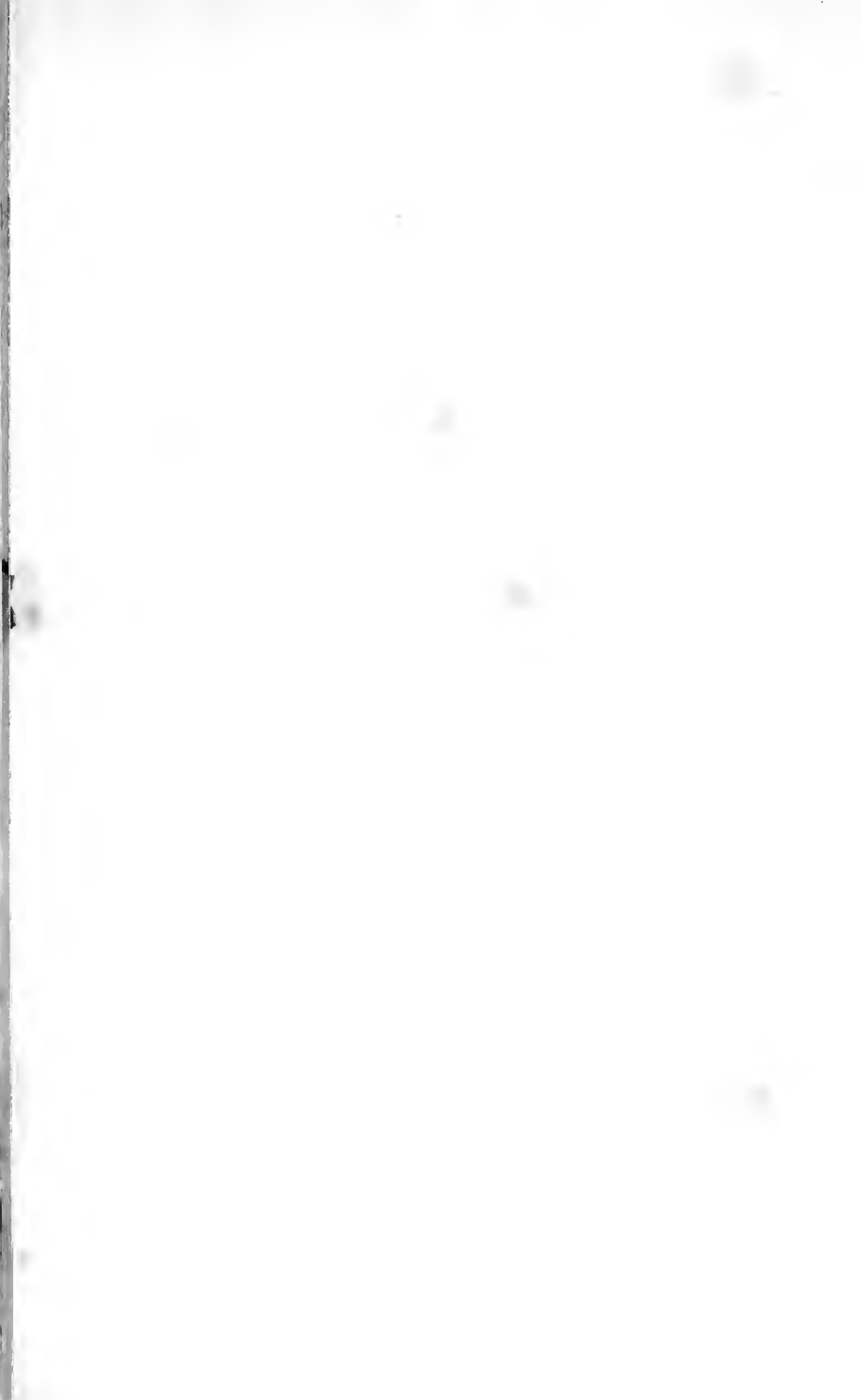
CHAP.

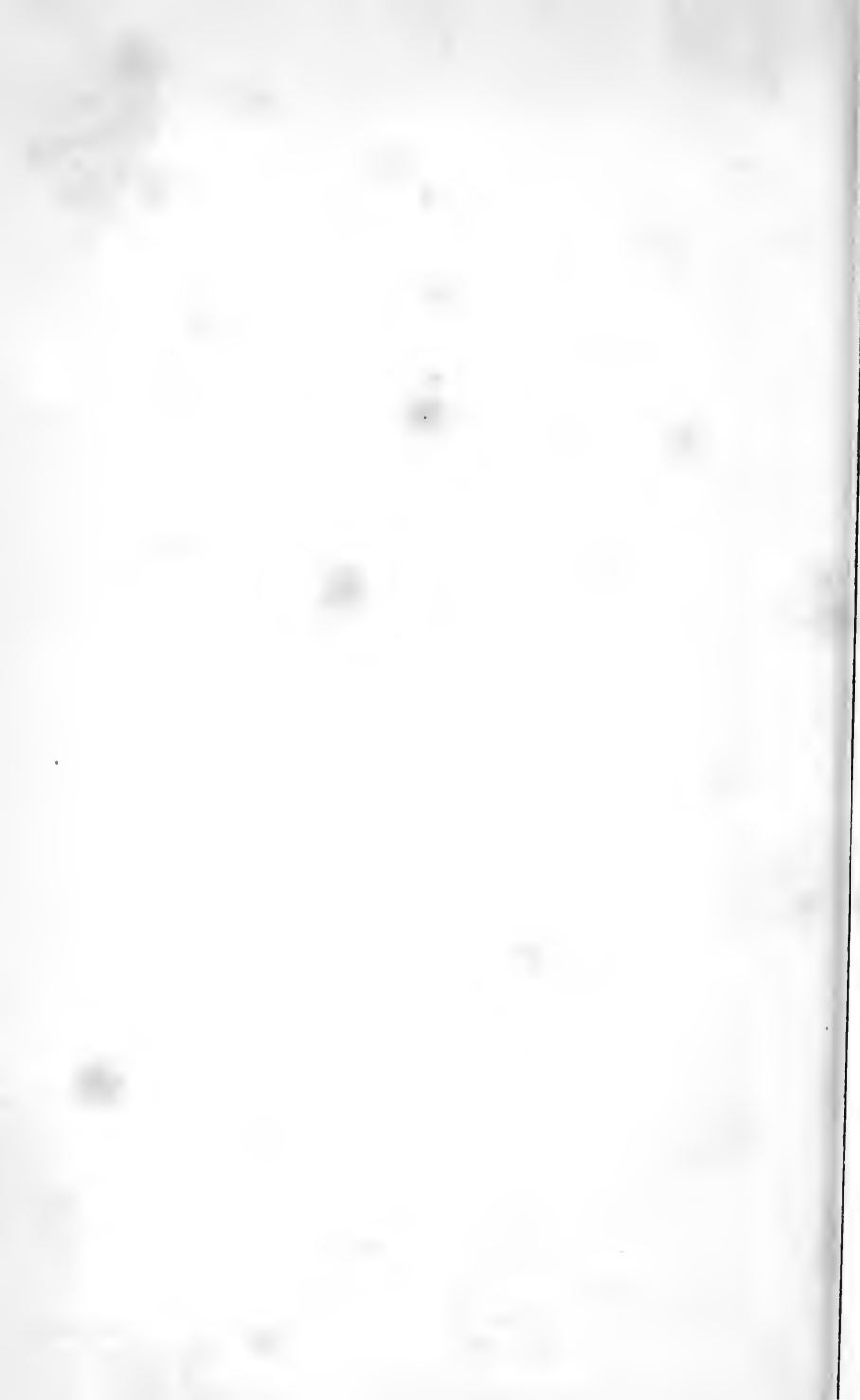
IV.

to the lords of the fees : and immediately an act of parliament was passed, assigning them to the hospitallers, for the same purposes for which they had been originally bestowed on the templars.¹²³

¹²³ Stat. at large, x. App. 23.

END OF VOL. III.







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